THE
STROLLING PLAYER;

OR,

LIFE AND ADVENTURES

OF

WILLIAM TEMPLETON.

1254
1257

IN THREE VOLUMES.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

VOL. III.

WE ARE SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS ARE MADE OF.
SHAKESPEAR.

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THE STROLLING PLAYER.

CHAPTER I.

I AWOKE again to life, and found myself on a strange bed, surrounded by several persons totally unknown to me. They gazed upon me with much anxiety, and I perceived the tear of philanthropy steal down the cheeks of many.

In a moment I recollected my situation, and the cause from which it sprang. The reflection overpowered me, and I fainted on the pillow.

On my return to reason, I inquired into the means of my preservation, and learnt that I owed it to a young sailor, who having observed the extravagance of my conduct, watched me to the act of desperation, when, with a heroism congenial with his profession, he plunged after, and brought me to the shore, thence, with the assistance of another person, to the public-house where I now lay. I desired to see him, but was informed, that the moment I had discovered signs of life, he hurried away, and had not since been seen.

The distracted state of my mind brought on a fever, which lasted near a month, and then left me in so weak a state, that I was confined to my room three weeks longer. All this time Caroline had not been heard of, spite of my unceasing inquiries.

In the mean time, my boxes had been removed to my present lodging, and my former landlord came daily to see, and condole with me. Mr. Hunter, and two of the ladies, were the only persons of the theatre, who had humanity enough to visit me, except the Manager, who once called, and expressed a complimentary regret at my misfortune.

I was now sunk to the lowest ebb of melancholy; for I believed no other, than that Caroline had met some accidental death, till I was, at last, roused from this opinion by a dream, wherein I saw her wantoning in the arms of my friend Brent; and to such a height of frenzy did the vision carry me, that I started from my bed, called aloud for pistols, and vowed revenge on the author of my supposed dishonour. So strongly was the idea engraved upon

my fancy, that I could not shake it off, though sleep had left me.

"It may be so," said I, and from that moment became a prey to jealousy.

Full of suspicion, and determined on revenge, I resolved to seek them. For that purpose, I instantly packed up my clothes, sent my box to the coach-office, and took place for Portsmouth, where his ship had been repaired. Previous to my departure, I sold off every article that was not of immediate use, in order to defray the expences of my sickness and my journey; then taking leave of the Manager, who betrayed not the least concern for my quitting his service, and afterwards of Mr. Hunter, I set off, and next morning arrived at Portsmouth.

Having loaded my pistols, I went

instantly to the Navy Post-Office, my heart teeming with mischief, and inquired the direction to Captain Brent.

"Captain Brent, Sir," answered the Postmaster, "has sailed with a convoy to the East Indies, full two months ago." In a moment the weakness of my nature, and mean suspicion, appeared in their proper colours, while I in vain endeavoured to shrink from retrospection.

"I have wronged a noble soul," said I, turning back towards the inn with the pace of a snail, and would willingly, like that animal, had it been in my power, have shrunk within my shell, and hid myself from mankind.

My stock of money being no more than two guineas, I judged it expedient to procure myself as cheap a lodging as possible.

possible. Accordingly, after dinner, I went in search of one, and soon suited myself in a decent public-house.

On the following evening, as I sat pondering on my situation, and my mind full of Caroline, my attention was drawn to a person, who, after having passed half an hour in silently reading a country newspaper, broke out with, "Oh ho! so I see we shall have the player folks here again."

Fixing an earnest look upon him, I demanded what he meant.

"Mean, Sir!" answered he—"why, I mean that this paper says the players are coming to this town next week; but you may look yourself, then you'll say, *seeing is believing*."

Begging pardon for my abrupt behaviour,

haviour, I accepted the paper from his hand, and read an advertisement, stating, that the theatre would open on the following week.

This was most acceptable intelligence to me, for I conceived hopes of an engagement, which would save the expence of journeying in search of one; for, however inadequate I might be, from my present state of mind, yet I saw no other means of supporting myself, therefore resolved to await the company's arrival, and offer myself to the Manager. This concern being off my thoughts, I supped at an early hour, and retired to bed—but not to rest, for sleep had flown from my pillow.

Of all corroding cares that prey upon the heart of man, none clings to it with such tenacity as jealousy, and

none so effectually clouds his reason. This fiend had possessed itself of me; nor could the efforts of reason shake it off. Captain Brent had ceased to be the object of my suspicion; it now rested on the ideal frailty of Caroline, which, I concluded, had fallen a sacrifice to some splendid villain.

The only relief I had to my aggravated situation, was pride. Pride taught me to believe, that a woman who, by her misconduct, could sacrifice her husband's peace, deserved not his love.

"I will endeavour," said I, "to banish this disgraceful passion from my breast: this love, that remains but to expose my weakness—Caroline, I will forget you!"

Such were my resolves; but the inefficacy

efficacy of my attempts proved that they sprung but from a man, and he too, one of the feeblest of his race.

According to the advertisement, the comedians arrived on the following week; and on the day preceding the opening of the theatre, I waited on the Manager. He was an old man, whose age amounted to, at least, seventy, with every concomitant of his years—*sans* teeth, *sans* eyes, and almost *sans* every thing. His head was bald, except one small white lock, that hung behind, which Time had seemed to preserve, in respect to that Fate, whom Virgil describes at the death of Dido; or rather, he looked like Time himself, prepared for Fate. By the bye, he had not entirely lost the relish for life, for he kept an excellent prop to his declining hours, in the shape of a handsome girl, about eighteen, who,

no doubt, witnessed many a sad proof of his chilly age.

The old gentleman heard me recite three or four speeches, displaying all the peevishness of his years, by dwelling upon trifles; and, at last, agreed to take me at twelve shillings a week. He accordingly gave me a character for the second night of performance. I played, but was incapable of feeling any thing except my own misfortunes: my acting was consequently so tame, and frequently so palpably false, that I repeatedly got hissed, and was once actually pelted off the stage.

At this period, the grand fleet lying at Spithead, the town was thronged with sailors, who in the evening crowded to the theatre, where they created such tumults, that the play never went on without repeated interruptions.

tions. Nothing was more common, than their sliding from the gallery to the boxes and pit, and climbing up again, to the great discomfiture of such as were seated in those parts.

One time, a gentleman being thus disturbed, could not restrain his resentment, and commenced a battery on the aggressor's back with his cane, when the son of Neptune, not having secured his situation, roared out to his shipmates above, "Halloo! main-top there, d—n my ——, here's a boatswain in disguise on the half-deck—lend a hand my lads." Immediately two more came down, and with the first fastened on the gentleman. Their friends from the gallery observing how things stood, threw down a rope they had brought, and keeping one end in their possession, cried out, "There, my

 boys,

boys, splice it round his midships and sling him over, then, d—n me, we'll have him to the gangway." They instantly obeyed, and tying it tight round his waist, pitched him over the boxes, and bawling out, "Now bouce away, my hearties," the poor gentleman was immediately hauled up, his posteriors bared, and subjected to a round dozen, while he called in vain for mercy.

Another evening, on my way to the house, I was overtaken by a waggon load of them, at full gallop, committing every kind of extravagance, while I observed, in particular, one on each side heaving the lead, and roaring out, "Quarter under water seven," &c. In that manner they proceeded to the doors of the theatre, where, unshipping a cargo of liquor, and various sorts of victuals,

victuals, they, spite of resistance, forced their way up to the gallery, where they gave loose to their stormy mirth.

The company remained two months at Portsmouth, and then proceeded to their next engagement, leaving me behind. For, previous to his departure, the Manager informed me that he had no farther occasion for my services, assigning as a reason, that he was too full, and I being the last engaged, must of course submit to necessity. I answered not a word, but returned disconsolate to my lodgings, well knowing that his real motive for discharging me was my incapacity; for I had not, during the whole time, discovered the least spark of merit, my depressed spirits never having been able to attain the animated passion which many of my characters required; and it was well if I passed over the evening without exciting

citing any thing worse than silent contempt.

My stock of money had now fallen to nine shillings, and where I remained there was not the least prospect of procuring more, or of supporting myself when that should be expended, unless I submitted to the desperate alternative of entering into the navy or army. Finding myself, therefore, threatened with poverty and contempt, my pride took the alarm, and roused me to consider on the most eligible means of pursuing my interest.

Having learned that a company was performing at a town twenty miles distant, I resolved to go thither; accordingly, selling off every thing I possessed, except the suit I wore and a change of linen, I paid my landlord, and set off by four the next morning on foot, with

twenty shillings in my pocket and my little bundle in my hand.

On my way, the cheerful aspect of the country had the happiest effect upon my spirits: the cares of life seemed suspended, and the most tranquil sensations arose within my breast. "Caroline," said I, "farewell; thy weakness be forgotten; I have pined enough beneath oppressive care, and, from this hour, renounce both that and thee."

I did not hasten my journey, but frequently stopped to gaze on the surrounding landscape: the face of Nature smiled upon me, for she was, in the words of Milton,

"In all her liv'ries, deck'd of Summer's pride."

At times I burst out into raptures. "O God!" cried I, "how ample are thy blessings, if man would but enjoy

them:

them : would he but leave those narrow views with which his misguided fancy deludes him, and dwell upon the beauties of thy wide creation ; then would he part from half his worldly cares, and rise to meet perfection."

At six o'clock in the evening I reached the town. It foreboded but little permanency to my elevated hopes, for I perceived nothing but a number of straggling houses, meanly built, streets unpaved and in shocking order, and people walking in them whose appearance indicated penury and toil. On addressing myself to one, and inquiring for the theatre, he stared at me with surprize, and demanded what I meant. I then bid him direct me to the play-house. "Wounds ! now I think I understand ye," said he, "I suppose you mean the *vagram show people ?*" On answering yes, he directed

me

me to a field at the farther end of the town, where stood the humble temple of Thespis.

I found it wretched beyond description, having been very lately a cow-house. The roof in many parts was broken in, and the audience consequently exposed to the air, which, however, at that season, might be deemed an advantage.

I stood some time surveying it on the outside, considering whether or not I should enter, for I was so shocked at its external appearance, that I dreaded to look farther into the misery of its tenants; but, at last, mustering resolution, I accosted the door-keeper, and demanded to speak with the Manager.

"I, Sir," said he, with a look of hungry solicitude, "am the Manager."

"I am

" I am come," said I, " to offer you my services, should you find them worthy of acceptance."

" Surely," returned he, " you mean to mock me. Look at me—observe this scene around you—do you imagine me worthy to command such an appearance as your's ? No, Sir, no ; our sharings have been of late sparing enough, God knows, and we do not mean to admit another to starve with us ; but, as a brother actor, you are free to walk in, if you please."

I thanked him, and asked if he knew of any other company in that part of the country, where I might chance to get employed ? on which he observed, there was one about forty miles distant, but that he could give me no information of their state; or whether I should stand any chance of

an engagement. Thanking him once more, I entered the house, which I found fully answer to its outside.

The audience consisted of about fourteen persons, chiefly women, who were immersed in awful attention, at the thunder and lightning, witches, and ghosts of *Macbeth*, for that was the play. The poor performers were infinitely worse apparelled than the humblest mountebank or show-people I ever saw; but I was astonished at the decency, and even respectability, of their acting, particularly that of *Macduff*, and of *Lady Macbeth*, which would have passed muster any where.

I could not but sigh at their indigence. The sight was painful to me, for I was too nearly allied to their sad state, to form comparisons of an exulting kind; and poverty is never con-

temned,

temned, but by those who hold themselves secure from her comfort-killing blast.

Before the play was finished I left this humble theatre, and proceeded to a public-house, where, having supped, I retired to bed.

Learning that the town of which the poor Manager spoke, lay on the road to London, I resolved to proceed thither the following day; and in case of non-success, to pursue my journey to the great city. I accordingly rose pretty early, and breakfasting upon bread and cheese and ale, set off again on foot to chase my wayward fortune. But stopping about noon at a public-house, I found myself, after sitting a while, so extremely wearied, that I was utterly incapable of continuing my journey that day. I therefore remained there

all night, and set forward again by ten next morning.

I had not travelled eight miles before I overtook an open waggon, which the driver informed me was going to the place of my destination: we were soon good friends, and for a shilling, with a few treats upon the road, he agreed to my riding all the way, which I gladly embraced, and, jumping up, was conveyed to the town, which I reached by nine in the evening. As nothing could be done at that late hour, I remained at the house where the waggon stopped, supped, and went to bed.

Next morning, making myself as decent in appearance as possible, about eleven o'clock I proceeded to the theatre, which I found at the end of a lane, leading to some fields. It seemed to me infinitely too spacious for the town,

which, though genteel, and well built, was by no means populous. The theatre had formerly been the stables of a nobleman, and looked deficient only in height, for it really made a respectable shew; having been well repaired, and graced with a handsome porch.

Perceiving some people going in whom I judged were performers, I followed them, and inquired for the Manager; when they informing me that he was expected in half an hour, I requested permission to wait his arrival. Observing much curiosity in their look, I explained to them the purpose of my visit, upon which, some of them with much good-nature, welcomed, and wished me success.

Shortly the Manager came. He was tall and meagre, but bearing in his features a sensibility of expression that com-

commanded respect. Bowing to him, I explained my business; on which, he eyed me some seconds with surprize, then demanded, whether I was new to the profession.

"No, indeed, Sir," said I; "I have had some sad experience in it."

"But you look so ill," observed he, "that I cannot believe you equal to the labour of performing."

I replied, that I had been severely indisposed, but was now, I hoped, sufficiently recovered to resume my occupation. He then took me aside, and said, "I'll tell you what, Sir, the inhabitants of this town seem to possess a considerable share of taste, and look for actors of distinguished merit; now, if you should be found adequate to their wishes, I will willingly engage you; but,

but, unless you can surpass the best in my company, I cannot possibly give you any hope."

"Sir," returned I, "it is impossible for me to answer you, from my total ignorance of the merits of your people; and even were I conscious of superior excellence, it would be an indelicacy in me to confess it; but you may assuredly judge, by seeing me perform." "With all my heart," said he, "and to-morrow night you shall play the part of *Hastings*, in *Jane Shore*; therefore, prepare yourself for it; attend rehearsal in the morning, and believe me, should you answer my expectations, I shall be the first to rejoice at your success."

I immediately returned to the public-house, and told the landlord that I should remain with him that night, and probably

probably many more. In the afternoon I walked in the fields, studying my part as I went along.

At the rehearsal next day, my hopes were by no means depressed, as I could perceive nothing striking in any person present. But I dwelt not too much on that, for I had frequently witnessed a performer's affectation and contradiction before a rival stranger. However, the evening proved that I had judged aright, for I played triumphantly throughout the piece, and completely bore away the laurel. The audience pointed out my glory, the actors shrunk from it, and the Manager confessed it; though, indeed, I had not much to pride myself upon, for, excepting the lady who played *Alicia*, the rest scarcely reached to mediocrity.

At the conclusion of my part the

 Manager

Manager called me to his room, and expressed his satisfaction at my performance, observing, that if twelve shillings a week and a benefit at that town, would content me, they were at my service. Seeing no better prospect at present, and anticipating a good night, I accepted his offer. Accordingly he appointed me characters for the following night, both in the play and entertainment; and when it arrived, I was gratified with a share of approbation equal to my first appearance.

I continued to play with repeated success, and in every new character seemed to increase in the estimation of the town's-people.

A fortnight had now passed, when, one evening, having just finished the character of *Hamlet*, I was informed that a stranger waited at the door to

speak

speak with me. Having dressed myself, I hastened to see who it could be, when, just as I turned into the lobby, a gentleman accosted me very familiarly by my name, caught hold of my hand, and gazing stedfastly on me some time, demanded whether I did not know him.

"Indeed, Sir," answered I, "I do not; but it is no wonder, for, in good faith, I have almost forgotten myself."

"Why, truly," said he, smiling, "not to flatter you, you seem greatly altered for the worse: why, how pale and thin you look; but possibly, you have not yet recovered from the terrors your father's ghost has occasioned; but do you not remember your old friend and school-fellow, Harvey, the companion of your boyish pleasures? Surveying his features more closely, I re-

 membered

membered them, and grasping his hand, expressed my happiness at seeing him.

"Come," said he, "this is no place for us to talk in; attend me to my lodgings, where we will spend the evening, and speak of great events."

Not having to perform in the after-piece, I accompanied him, and in a short time reached his house, where, bringing forth two bottles of wine, and ordering supper, he desired I would begin to enjoy myself.

"You must know, Templeton," said he, "that I am determined you shall try your fortune on the boards of Drury, to which, in my opinion, your merit is equal, and I trust that my influence will secure you an entry upon them, therefore we will lose no time. You must resign your present engage-

ment, and proceed to London. I cannot accompany you myself, being about to proceed on a tour to the Continent, but will give you a letter that shall have the same effect. I arrived here but three days ago, and hearing the name of Templeton mentioned with much admiration, conceived it might be you; accordingly, to ascertain that opinion, I went this evening to the theatre, and anxiously waited your entrance; at last you came, and though greatly altered, and disguised, yet your features were too well engraved on my memory to be forgotten."

We spent the night as agreeably as any two friends can imagine, after so long a separation; he overjoyed at the service he hoped to render me, and I full of hope and gratitude.

Next to Brent, Harvey had been my

most intimate friend. He informed me, that after leaving school he had made a voyage to the West Indies, where he had remained till very lately, and had considerably increased his fortune.

At twelve o'clock we parted, under a mutual promise of meeting again next day.

On the morning I waited on Mr. Towers (the Manager), and informed him of the necessity for my quitting his company immediately. He at first appeared extremely serious, and was inclined to call in question the justice of my conduct; but I pleaded my cause so strongly, that in the end he shook me by the hand, and wished me all the success I deserved.

I would willingly have staid for my

benefit,

benefit, but it being a fortnight distant, my friend deemed it too great a delay, and I myself concluded that it would be impolitic to risk so bright a prospect for the chance of enriching my pockets with a few pounds; I therefore played only that evening, and on the following morning went, attended by my friend, to meet the coach. Previously to our setting forth, he gave me my letter of recommendation to the Manager of Drury, and insisted on my acceptance of a ten pound bank-note, to defray my expences.

Having reached the inn, I took leave of my friend and mounted on the outside: the coachman then drove off, and the following morning I arrived safely in London.

CHAP. II.

HAVING paid my carriage and breakfasted, I had about nine guineas left, and judging that my present appearance would go but little towards my recommendation among strangers, I resolved to mend it, and to that end went directly to a sale shop, where I purchased a decent blue coat, black silk waistcoat and breeches, with a pair of stockings of the same, and a ruffled shirt; then hastening back to the inn, dressed myself to the best advantage.

Thus attired, I went, with a palpitating heart, to the awful theatre of Drury-Lane, and inquired for the Manager. The door-keeper informed me that he was not expected till one o'clock.

At one I went again, and being ushered into his room, found him busily employed in perusing some manuscripts. He rose and received me with a politeness that was painful to me, from an apprehension of his imagining my business of a more important nature to himself. However, making him as modest a bow as I could, I presented him the letter, which he had no sooner finished, than turning to me again, with undiminished ceremony, he said, "Sir, you are here spoken of in very strong terms by Mr. Harvey, and he is a gentleman so high in my estimation, that you may rely on my utmost exertions in your behalf; you will have the goodness, therefore, to call upon me in the course of a week, and in the interim I will name you to the Proprietors."

With my heart swelling with expecta-

 tion

tion and anticipated success, I returned to the inn, where I treated myself with a good dinner and a pint of wine.

In the afternoon I went to the house of Mrs. Foster, the lady of that generous friend of whom I spoke in the early part of my history; but found that she had removed, and on inquiring of the people who then resided there, was informed that she had married again. "Is she indeed re-married?" said I, and turning from the door, "then I have no farther title to her notice; my presence might but prove obtrusive, or serve to awaken in her memory sensations that should sleep for ever."

Finding the necessity of moving from the inn, which would be too expensive, I that same day hired a reasonable lodging in the house of a respectable trades-

tradesman named Price, who no sooner learnt my profession, and prospects of success, than he treated me with the most redundant politeness, in which he was ably seconded by his wife.

When the time arrived, I again waited on the Manager, who displaying the same ceremony as before, informed me that he had spoken to the principal Proprietor, who readily acquiesced in the request of Mr. Harvey, and would certainly appoint an evening for my appearance. I then asked, when I should attend him again? to which he replied, in a week or ten days, and, as a salve to my impatience, presented me with four box orders for the performance of that night.

Though I was concerned at this delay, yet the pleasing concurrence of the Proprietor proved a sufficient antidote to my temporary disappointment.

 On

On my return home, I invited Mr. Price and his wife to accompany me in the evening to the play, and, as there was an order to spare, begged them to compliment some friend with it; at the same time, I imparted to them the farther promise of the Manager. In return, they requested my company to dine and spend the day with them, with which I complied. Indeed this was a favour they frequently solicited my acceptance of; and such was the sinking state of my purse, that I had seldom resolution enough to refuse.

The person whom they sent for to join us, was an agreeable young lady, who appeared willing to return any advances I chose to make, in seeking her regard; but my heart was too much torn by preceding events, to admit of love; for the remembrance of Caroline still kept it from repose.

After

After tea we proceeded to the theatre, and secured good front seats. The play was *Othello*. I sat in prying observation on the merits of the performers. I anxiously looked for that pre-eminence which is thought to distinguish the town from the country performers; but saw it only in a few, the greater part displaying no marked genius, or even the propriety which their experience ought to have given them. It appeared as though they thought that to walk, to look, and to speak differently from what they had ever seen in Nature, was all that was necessary.

"Observe," said the young lady, my companion—"observe how majestically Mr. —— treads the stage. O! I never saw any body walk like him in my life—Did you, Sir?"

"Never

" Never, never, Madam," said I— " Nature cannot furnish his prototype."

His strides were a full foot beyond their natural mark, while, by the motion of his hinder parts, his cloak swung from side to side, something resembling the tail of an angry bull. The principals, however, were sufficient to fill me with apprehensions for myself, and I left the house with infinitely more doubt of my powers than I ever felt before.

Amid the contention of my hopes and fears, I had not neglected writing to the country concerning Caroline; but was unable to hear the least tidings of her. I still believed that she had forfeited her virtue; and that idea rather impressed me with revenge than grief. But revenge is a headstrong child of sorrow, and still I was unhappy.

The week being elapsed, I punctually attended the Manager, who told me that he had not forgotten me; but could give no answer then, desiring me, however, to call upon him in a few days. I took a reluctant leave of him, for my fears foreboded disappointment; besides which, another circumstance tended much to sink my spirits, namely, that I had not more than two shillings left.

I had for some time lived in the most frugal manner possible, and, to prevent an exposure of my distress, used to walk at the hour of dinner a short distance in the country, where I would stop at some humble ale-house, and make a meal of bread and cheese, and half a pint of beer. I breakfasted upon milk, affecting to prefer it to any thing else; and at night would content myself at some public-house in town, with

a glass of porter and a biscuit. Thus had I lived since my arrival in town, except what I owed to the generosity of my landlord; but I was now unable to continue even this humble regimen.

When I next waited on the Manager, he informed me that the Proprietor had on the preceding day gone out of town, and would return the latter part of the following week, at which time he would be sure to introduce me to him.

"Alas! Sir," said I, "will you let necessity plead for the urgency of my sentence: unless you indulge me with an early fulfilment of your promise, in bringing me forward, I must return again to the country."

He bowed with the utmost complacency, presented me with a couple of orders, and gave his honour to appoint a night

a night when next I should see him. I could urge no more; but left him, and returned pensively to my lodgings. I gave the orders to Mrs. Price, who invited me to dinner; but I refused, saying I had dined; which was false; nor had I the least prospect of procuring a meal. I then betook myself to my own room, and remained there till the evening, venting my sorrow, and conjecturing how I should proceed. I almost came to the desperate resolution of immediately going back to the country, and of begging my way till I met with some employment; but a ray of hope forbade the execution of it, and I determined, at any rate, if possible, to stay, and see the Proprietor. But being pressed by hunger, something must immediately be done, and casting my eyes upon my trunk, " the contents of that, " sighed I, " will surely purchase me bread for a few days." I instantly opened

opened it, and taking out every article, except one shirt, a neckcloth, and pair of stockings, tied them up in a handkerchief, and proceeded to the first pawnbroker's I could find, from which I issued out with twelve shillings, and my spirits greatly elevated, as I was now enabled to live in the manner above described.

At the expiration of ten days, I again went to the Manager, in the full hope of obtaining a definitive answer; but was again disappointed. The Proprietor, he said, had arrived in town that day, and could not possibly transact business till the next; desiring, however, that I would be at the theatre by twelve o'clock.

The time being come, I accordingly went, and after waiting an hour and a half in the Manager's room, he entered with the Proprietor.

"This, Sir," said the former, "is Mr. Templeton, so highly recommended by Mr. Harvey."

"No doubt," returned the latter, with a slight bow to me—"no doubt the gentleman is equal to his praise, but has he proposed any character?"

"None, Sir," answered the other.

"Well then, Mr. Templeton, you must think of something, and in about a month you shall come forward; for our nights are all fixt up to that time, I believe."

"Cannot we contrive, Sir," observed the Manager, "for him to play before that time?"

"How so?" demanded the other—"Are not the pieces all laid out?"

"Sir,"

"Sir," said I, "procrastination, to me, will be fatal; and rather than inconvenience you by preparing a play on my account, I will gladly take a subordinate character."

"O well, well, Sir," returned he, "I have no objection. Let me think a while—there is *Hamlet*. Is there any part you would prefer in that, under the leading character?"

"*Laertes*," answered I—"*Laertes*, Sir, with all my heart."

"Well, and with all my heart too," said he: "then, by all means, prepare yourself for *Laertes*."

"To-morrow week, Mr. Templeton," said the Manager, "*Hamlet* will be presented; therefore prepare against that day, and attend rehearsal in the morning."

morning." I thanked them, and took my leave.

With a heart as light as my purse, I flew home, and acquainted Mr. and Mrs. Price of my happy interview; for I really imagined my fortune to be secure; and such a stranger was I to doubt, that I informed them also of my straitened circumstances; and apologizing for my backwardness in the rent, of which I was three weeks in arrear, I requested the loan of a few guineas. Mr. Price, on this, generously advanced me five. I next begged him to recommend me to a tailor, which he accordingly doing, I immediately bespoke a handsome suit of clothes on credit. Three guineas of the five, I laid out in necessaries, trusting the remaining two would last me till my engagement commenced.

I now attended the theatre daily, ranging at freedom behind the scenes, and getting acquainted with several of the performers. I could not but admire the happy life they seemed to enjoy, when compared with their brethren in the country. The first, surrounded by friends, and invited by pleasure, would be studying which they should oblige, or which prefer; while the last would, perhaps, be summoning all his genius to his aid, in order to procure himself an humble meal.

CHAP. III.

AT length the day arrived. I attended rehearsal in the morning, and experienced much attention from those performers who were to be my partners of the scene, but more particularly from the gentleman who played *Hamlet*: he honoured me with his advice in respect to the conduct of situation, and with the utmost good-nature repeated the fencing scene with me four or five times. The business of the morning concluded, he invited me to dine with him, which, with proper acknowledgments, I declined, that I might not lose a moment's time for preparation.

I hastened home again, and presenting my friends with eight orders the Manager

Manager had given me, consented to dine with them, after which I retired to my own room, where I remained, repeating my part, and studying before my glass, till the hour of attendance arrived.

No antiquated beau ever used such pains to render himself lovely in the eyes of his mistress, as I did in preparing myself for the awful night of trial.

I then flew to the theatre, which I no sooner entered than I proceeded to the dressing-room, and was soon equipped under the hands of a smart youth, who I loaded with thanks, and promises of returning obligation. This task completed, I tripped gaily to the stage, and took a peep from the curtain. Good Heaven! what were my sensations on viewing the expanse of the

the theatre, and the multitude of its audience, before whom I was to appear in a few minutes! I who had been so bold before, and wantoned through my scenes on a country stage, now trembled with apprehensions.

I cannot conceive a situation where the courage of mental faculties are more strongly required, than on a first appearance before a London audience, when, if they desert him, inevitable disappointment must follow. Imagine, reader, for a moment, a youth brought forth with all the imperfections of his nature, to stand exposed before the invidious examination of envious curiosity and rigid criticism. Each of them expecting to find perfection, or dwelling upon the very errors that his fear creates, with merciless scrutiny; and though ten of them may not think alike, yet each deeming himself infallible.

A short time I stood combating my terrors, in the midst of which the curtain drew up, and in a moment I stood exposed to the tremendous assemblage of critics, wits, and *gods!*

I advanced, and making them the accustomed bow, they returned me a salutation, which, though it in some degree confounded me, had a happy effect upon my spirits. In this scene I had but one short speech, which I uttered in a faultering tone; notwithstanding, the audience gave me so generous an encouragement, that I wished I could have spoken it over again. The next scene I played with increasing confidence, and at my exit again received an ample proof of my countrymen's kindness. They are ever the same when present at a first appearance; for whatever errors they may discover, or however much in their own hearts

hearts they may censure, they seldom with-hold their enlivening support from the trembling object of their investigation.

In his third scene *Laertes* is full of passion: his heart is torn by sorrow for the death of his father and the insanity of his sister, while it is bursting with resentment at the fatal object of the cause. But not to tire your patience, reader, with too minute a relation, suffer me to say, that I received such marks of approbation as I did not imagine the part, or my powers, could have drawn forth. It was such as led me to conclude that my fame and fortune were established beyond the subversion of any thing but Fate; nor were the performers and the company behind the scenes backward to encourage this opinion. I anxiously looked round for the Manager, expecting to meet his com-

compliments also, but not seeing him, my vanity concluded that he had seated himself in front, the better to form his judgment. In the following parts I was equally successful, and when I died, the audience confirmed their satisfaction by every demonstration that their varied natures could suggest, in knocking, clapping, acclamation, &c.

The curtain having dropped, I immediately undressed myself; after which I mixed in the green-room, and again underwent a siege of compliments. Seating myself down, I waited in hope of seeing the Manager; but remaining there till the entertainment was over, and the company nearly all gone, concluded that he would not be seen that evening, I therefore went home, where I was received with the warmest congratulations. They had prepared a supper for me, which was enlivened by their

their rejoicings at my success, while I, in my heart, vowed lasting gratitude to them.

The following morning I sent to purchase all the newspapers of the day, and on perusing them, was utterly astonished at their various and contrasted opinions. As a sample, I here present you, reader, with the critiques from two of the most celebrated of them, and leave you to judge of their different effects upon my mind.

" DRURY-LANE.

" Last night a novelty appeared on these boards in the character of *Laertes*. We understand he has been long wandering in the thorny path to fame as a country actor; but he has acquired very little of that mastery in his profession, which is often the result of experience. His figure is very well proportioned, and his features tolerably expressive, but his tones are monotonous, his action pantomimical, and his conception poor, at the same time marked by an

 affectation

affectation that does but little credit to his understanding. On the whole, we deem him by no means calculated to maintain any station before a London audience, unless it be in pantomime, or the humblest departments of the drama."

" We were last night gratified at Drury-Lane Theatre, by the first appearance of a young gentleman, named Templeton, in the character of *Laertes*. His merits, we conceive, are such as will entitle him to the highest favour of the public, and we hope to see him soon brought forward in a more important part. His person is above the middle size, and well formed; his features, though not fine, are striking and expressive: his action is manly and graceful, and his voice sufficiently powerful, various, and well-toned; while his reading displays a masterly and matured judgment. We earnestly hope his situation on these boards will be permanent, and that his merit will be properly encouraged."

At noon I attended the theatre, where I saw the Manager, who paid me

me some high encomiums, but said nothing relative to an engagement, or my playing again; from which I concluded that I was established, and should receive my salary in due order; in which opinion a gentleman of the theatre, whose advice I asked on the occasion, confirmed me.

I now gave way to numberless indulgences; such as hiring the first floor of my landlord; agreeing to board entirely with him, and bespeaking more clothes of the tailor. My pleasures would have been for the time uninterrupted, had I not still dwelt upon Caroline, for, spite of my prospects, I was no sooner left alone to reflection, than the remembrance of her embittered every hope.

Every morning I punctually attended the theatre, till the day of payment had

 passed;

passed; and though I took care to throw myself in the Treasurer's way, he took not the least notice of me. Another week passed on in the same manner, and nothing transpired, either from the Manager or any other person.

I now became particularly anxious to know my doom, as Mr. Price had given me some very significant hints respecting my delayed payment. Accordingly, one morning I accosted the Manager, and with the utmost modesty, requested to know the extent of my hopes: he answered, that he really could not then give me a definitive answer, as the Proprietors had not yet been consulted.

"Sir," said I, in a firm tone, "my situation is such as will no longer brook delay;" on which he gave me his honour, that I should know the result of

their

their opinions before the expiration of that week. This satisfied me, as I conceived that the intimated consultation was only to fix my salary to a sum according to their estimation of my abilities. This opinion I imparted to Mr. Price, in order to check his eager glances, which frequently disturbed both my conscience and my pride; for, by the bye, I had borrowed three guineas more of him.

The time being arrived, I once more applied to the Manager, when, to my astonishment, and unutterable disappointment, he answered, that the Proprietors had been all applied to concerning me, and their joint opinion was, that my powers not being adapted to so large a theatre as Drury-Lane, they could not, without burthening the fund with inactive performers, think of engaging me, as there were no less than

than fifty persons, who, with pretensions equally strong as mine, waited the first vacancies for establishments.

"Is it possible!" exclaimed I, "that the Proprietors can be so mean as to reject me now, and under so flimsy a pretence? Why have I been so long detained, depending on their justice? I have forfeited my situation in the country; I have accumulated debts which I cannot possibly discharge, and am reduced to beggary. Why did they not decide before I brought such distress upon my head?"

To this he answered, that he was much concerned to find my expectations had so much outrun my fortune; but he being only the agent of others, could not follow the dictates of his own will. Without further reply, I hurried out of the theatre with a heart at enmity with all mankind.

I proceeded to my lodging; but on approaching the door, stopped suddenly, and began to reflect, what had I to do there.—" To remain here any longer," thought I, " will be now dishonesty, as there is no prospect of my remunerating their kindness, or of diminishing, in any degree, the debt I have contracted." At last I determined not to enter the house till dark, lest my embarrassment should be read in my countenance; therefore, turning a contrary way, I crossed Holborn, and stopped not till I had reached the fields, where I remained, venting by turns, my reproaches and my sorrow. In that strain I continued, without refreshment, or indeed once thinking of any, till the clock struck ten, when I went home, and telling Mr. Price I had supped, immediately retired to my room; where, throwing myself upon the bed, I gave a loose to all the anguish of disappoint-

ment. In that manner I remained till reflection came to my aid, and roused me to a consideration of my interest and safety. The whole amount of what I owed to the tailor and Mr. Price, was about thirty pounds, while I did not possess more than four shillings. The dread of a prison filled my mind, and there were no means of escaping it, but by immediate flight. The behaviour of Mr. Price had of late greatly changed, being cold and suspicious. As for my tailor, he only acted on the recommendation of others, consequently, there was no favour to be expected from him.

At last, I resolved to fly from the gathering storm on the following day; and accordingly prepared for the occasion, by packing up two changes of linen, with as many useful articles as my pockets could hold, with the addition

tion of my great coat, without rendering myself conspicuous. I next wrote a letter to Mr. Price, relating to him all that passed between the Proprietors, the Manager, and myself; expressing a deep concern for the conduct my misfortunes obliged me to observe, and promising faithfully to discharge my obligation whenever fortune should empower me. This I folded carefully up, and placed in a situation where I was sure they would not find it, till they should make a general search amongst the things I was under the necessity of leaving behind.

Next morning I arose at six o'clock, and the servant being up, informed her that I was going a short distance into the country, and probably should not return before night; I then sauntered about the streets till I perceived a pawnbroker's shop open, and stepping into

into it, parted with those things I had done up for the purpose. He lent me two guineas on them. Thus furnished, I proceeded in a northern direction, and was soon beyond the streets of London.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

I CONTINUED onwards about ten miles, when perceiving a detached public-house, I entered it, and regaled myself with a pint of ale and some cold beef; then pursuing my journey, stopped not till I reached a village sixteen miles farther, where, resolving to remain till the following day, I entered a public-house, and bespoke a bed for the night.

Here, while I sat at my supper, a young man came in, whom, from his dress and mild deportment, I judged to be of the church, which conjecture, upon farther observation, was more firmly established.

We commenced a conversation, in the course of which he informed me, that he was curate of a village about twenty miles distant, to which he was then on his way on foot, the state of his finances being too low to afford the convenience of a stage-coach, or horse. "But one great duty in a christian," observed he, "is the bearing adversity with patience and humility; and, indeed, when I compare myself to others, who with infinitely more virtue, are yet oppressed by greater sufferings, I ought rather to acknowledge the bounty of that Power who bestows on me so many blessings, than dispute his justice, or sigh for luxuries which may be dispensed with."

"True, Sir," returned I; "nothing can be more unreasonable, or more strongly betray a selfish principle, than calling the attention of Omnipotence

to

to our imaginary wants, and pining for superfluities, when so many of our fellow-creatures are contending with the heaviest misfortunes; such as hunger, sorrow, and disease; and I think the being who can presume to demand of Heaven a partial favour, deserves its wrath. It is pride insufferable; it is disputing the Almighty's justice, and preferring our own wisdom to his."

"Sir," said he, "there is a congeniality between us that should make us friends; and I trust we shall meet again."

"Perhaps in Heaven," answered I; "for my circumstances preclude me that happiness in this world: in the first place, nothing can be more opposite than our professions; at least, so mankind agree, though I think erroneously; for, trace them both to their origin,

origin, and it will be found that both have virtue for their basis, and, indeed, at the earliest periods of the drama, the player and the priest were as one. Nor is their object at this time different; the first should lead the soul to virtue, for which the last prepares it. I have this day travelled from London, where my prospects have been disappointed, and am now wandering I know not whither, in search of a precarious subsistence: this night I shall sleep here, and in the morning pursue my humble fortune, with no other guide to lead, and no other hope to prompt me, than chance."

"I perceive then, Sir," said he, "that your profession is the stage, which from my heart I honour; both from its use, and the genius it has furnished to the world; although I entertain some doubt, whether it

does

does not produce as much evil as good."

"And though a player, Sir," said I, "I also have my doubts. The stage, I think is useful in a populous city; but baneful in a village. In the first, it serves to check the growth of vice and folly: in the latter, it disturbs the domestic peace, and gives birth to levity and idleness. The stage, in short, is a medicine for diseased minds, and ought not to be administered to the healthy."

He assented to my opinion, and entered farther into conversation. He at last came to the resolution of remaining all night at the house, for the sake of pursuing his journey in the morning in my company. "We will walk together," said he, "and conversation shall lighten the toil of travel."

I an-

I answered, that nothing could be more agreeable. He then desired the landlord to prepare him a bed, and ordered a bowl of punch, of which he insisted on my partaking with him. Time passed on in very pleasant conversation on a variety of subjects, in all of which he was infinitely my superior. We supped together, and at eleven o'clock retired to our beds.

At seven next morning I rose, and was shortly joined by my companion. We immediately breakfasted, and paying our reckoning, set forward on the road. His discourse on the way teemed with instruction and entertainment. He made some shrewd remarks upon the contrasted manners of the town and country people, and greatly preferred the happy ignorance of the latter to the fallacious pleasures of the former.

"And now," said he, fixing his eyes upon a gentleman approaching us on horseback—"and now you shall see the effects of a *town* education.

The gentleman was now close upon us, when, to my astonishment and confusion, my companion, masking his features with a black crape, seized the reins of the horse, drew a pistol from his pocket, and pointing it to the gentleman's breast, in an imperious tone demanded his watch and money: the other, without hesitation, instantly delivered the first, and next his purse; then, finding himself freed, spurred his beast, and gallopped off as swift as lightning.

During this event, I stood nearly petrified with amazement, from which I was roused by my companion, who rejoined me at the end of his encounter.

"Such,"

"Such," said he, in an impressive tone, and with the most placid countenance—"such is the effects of a *town* education. My father ruined himself in supporting me at one of the most expensive schools in London, where I was taught every thing by the different masters who attended; he fondly hoping that my accomplishments would one day repay him with wealth and honour; but, happily, he lived not to witness the baneful result of his erring indulgence. The case is, that forming connexions with youth of rank and fortune, my pride would not suffer me to descend to any other society, and, from want of other resources, I had recourse to the gaming-table, where, with others of my profession, mingling with noblemen, my vanity was gratified, while every principle of honour became extinct, and every moral virtue fled before the practices to which my necessities

cessities impelled me. At times, when driven to the lowest extremity, this desperate conduct has been my only alternative; and such it is to numbers of my profession, who have courage enough to venture on the game; for be assured, it is not conscience, but fear only, that with-holds them. Conscience, my friend, if such I may call you, holds not her temple in a gamester's breast; and never can the man who seeks to bask upon another's ruin, be restrained by any thing but the rod of justice. But I feel myself at this moment an exception to the rule, for I am impressed with an esteem for your worth, and an interest in your situation. This virtue, perhaps, may be of short duration, suffer me, therefore, to make a happy use of it, by aiding your distress. This purse contains eleven guineas, half of which is at your service."

"Never,"

"Never," answered I, "never will I stand indebted to a kindness that will dishonour my acceptance; and I wonder to see such sensibility and depravity exist in the same heart; moreover, I beg of you, and your friendship cannot better display itself than by obeying my wish, that you will leave me this instant; for while I tremble for your safety, I am apprehensive of my own."

"Will you not accept my friendship?" said he, "why then we must part; but first, let me hush your fears for my safety,"—saying which, he opened his bundle, and taking out a smock-frock, a coloured handkerchief, and a pair of drab cloth spatterdashes, pulled off his black coat, and dressed himself in them; then emptying the pockets of the last, he packed them into a bundle, and advanced to me with the exact appearance of a country labourer.

" Now," said he, " are you afraid of my company ?"

" No," replied I, " but still we must part."

" Well, then," said he, " since you are on the tiptoe of morality, let me, before we part, give you one piece of advice; which will shew the sincerity of my esteem. Never trust appearances, however specious; but, with strangers, always act with suspicion, till you have incontrovertible proofs of their honour. When first I saw you, I marked you for an object of plunder; but discovering your poverty, my hopes of course vanished: by listening to your discourse, I grew pleased with your society, and could not help comparing you to my former self. No wonder, then, I felt an esteem for you, which still, and ever will remain. But I will

I will no longer interrupt your peace. ——Farewell! fortune be your guide, and heaven your reward." He then offered me his hand, which I accepted, and exhorting him to seek a more honourable way of life, bade him adieu.

We had now come to a cross road: he turned to the right; I still pursued the direct line. Being extremely apprehensive of pursuit, and fearing I should be taken up on suspicion, I ran a considerable way, and then continued in a brisk walk till four o'clock in the afternoon, when coming to another village, and being nearly exhausted with fatigue, I could not resist the temptation of a public-house which presented itself to my view, but entered, and called for a pint of ale, with bread and cheese. My fears, however, would not suffer me to remain there long; for,

having

having finished my meal, I again set forward.

I continued on my way till every object was veiled in darkness, and the dread of pursuit had left me. I therefore resolved to stop at the first house that could accommodate me with a bed. Thus determined, I walked on as fast as my strength would enable me, and the obscurity of night permit; but having proceeded till I was faint with fatigue, without any signs of a dwelling, I halted, and began doubting whether it was best to go on, or stop and take up my lodging in the field. Having remained a short time in this suspense, my ears were on a sudden greeted by the distant sound of a violin: on which I concluded that a house must be at hand. But, lest my hearing might mistake the direction from

whence the sound proceeded, I mounted a tree, and to my great satisfaction, perceived a light beaming from the casement of a farm-house, about two hundred yards to my left, at the end of a narrow-hedged lane, which the rays discovered to me. Instantly quitting the tree, I proceeded very cautiously, fearful that some lurking dog might attack me, to the door, or rather gate; the house being inclosed towards the road, with a paling.

I listened attentively awhile, and could distinguish nothing but the sound of mirth and good humour: "These people," thought I, "are too happy to deny an act of humanity; they will, no doubt, give me a bed, or at least a resting place in some part of their habitation." With this hope I knocked at the gate with a stick I had picked up

on

on my way, and in a few seconds it was opened by a venerable old man, who demanded my business.

"I am a stranger," said I, "benighted and bewildered, and solicit a shelter for the night."

"If thou art a stranger, and in want," returned he, "it is but just that I should grant thy request." Then taking my hand, conducted me into the house, where I discovered a company of several persons, male and female, on each of whose features sat harmony and joy. They were seated widely round the room, as if to give space for dancing. In a corner of the chimney sat an old lame fiddler, whose unfellowed legs (for one was of wood) protected an ample mug of ale that stood between them on the floor: next to him was an old lady, mistress of the house and ceremonies, smiling

smiling through age at the pleasures of youth, and which she seemed anxious to increase. But the person who most attracted my attention, was a fine young fellow, who, though habited as a countryman, yet betrayed the sailor in his complexion and deportment; his right arm encircled the waist of a beautiful and modest girl next him, from whose expressive eyes no object could withdraw his own.

I made my obedience to them all, and observed, that I feared my serious air would prove an unwelcome interruption to their mirth. "I am but a beggar," concluded I, "and too wearied to mix in your mirth; but my heart will dance at your happiness."

"Young man," said the old lady, "thou bring'st with thee two great recommendations, youth and good-nature;

ture; come, sit down by me, and I will soon make thee as merry as the rest." I gladly obeyed her command, which done, she rose, and placing a small round table before me, soon covered it with a smiling plenty of meat, pies, and tarts; then seating herself by me, and having filled my plate, she addressed the young man I above described, desiring him to fill me a mug of ale.

"With all my heart, mother," said he, rising from his chair, and obeying her; then advancing to me, and shaking my hand, proceeded—"Brother, accept my hearty service; I am glad you have steered into our humble port, where you will find safe anchorage and as good cheer as we can bestow." I shook his hand in return, and expressed my gratitude at his kindness and hospitality.

"Why, look ye," resumed he, "you must know this is a happy night with me, for I have taken in tow a tight little vessel for the voyage of life, and there she sits."

"O, then," exclaimed I, "may you ever keep her to the windward of adversity, and close hauled to happiness."

During my meal, the old lady whispered me, that Harry Mainland (the name of the young man) was the son of a neighbouring farmer; that he had been bred to the sea, and been several voyages to the East Indies, in which trade, having made a little fortune, he had that day married her daughter, to whom he had been long betrothed, and now intended to spend his life in his father's farm, which was then undergoing some repairs for their reception.

I had no sooner supped than I was solicited to dance; but on my assuring them of my incapacity, from fatigue, they ceased pressing me, but requested I would sing, which I instantly complied with, and gave infinite satisfaction. Shortly after, Harry Mainland favoured us with a hornpipe, which he executed with much grace and wonderful agility. That finished, all the rest, except the old lady, the fiddler and myself, joined in a country-dance. Having again resumed their seats, they called upon me for another song, which I again willingly answered; it then went round the whole company, and those who could not sing told a story. In short, the night passed away in the happiest manner possible, and had not the remembrance of Caroline glanced across my mind, I should have enjoyed it in its full extent. But, alas! my heart never expanded towards

 delight,

delight, without being checked by a sigh at her loss, or a tear for her fallen virtue.

My kind host, whose name I learnt was Bowman, observing my melancholy, which I vainly attempted to banish, expressed his regret at it, and gently hinted a wish to know the cause. "Perhaps," said he, "the advice of an old man may be of use to thee." The eyes of all the company were then fixed upon me, in which I perceived an eager curiosity, and a hope of my compliance; therefore, from a consciousness of obligation, I commenced a brief account of my life till my marriage with Caroline, when I became more circumstantial, and dwelt upon the event of her loss with renewed sorrow, describing my wretchedness thereat, and rash attempt. "In me, my friends," said

I, "you

I, "you behold a being who dared arrest the will of God, and throw himself upon eternity."

"Stand clear," exclaimed Harry Mainland, and springing to me with a bound of joy and exultation—"stand clear! It was I, my heart, who saved you; it was I who snatched you from the flood; 'twas I who carried you dead in my arms to the house, and saw you making into the stream of life again. But I could not stop; our ship was waiting the breeze, and we sailed that night."

Reader, I cannot tell thee what I felt at that moment: I cannot describe to thee the sensations of my heart, and what I thought of, and how I gazed at Harry, and how my soul expanded to join his. These things, thou knowest

est as well as I, o'ertop all art, the painter and the poet.

Each person melted into tears; they all rose, and giving full scope to their joy, embraced us both in turn.

It was some time before I could proceed with my history; but at last, resuming it, continued on to my arrival at the door of this happy mansion.

I had no sooner made an end, than Mrs. Bowman and her husband exacted from me a promise to remain with them a week.

About one o'clock, the charming bride, in obedience to a hint from her mother, retired to bed, and, shortly after, the anxious Henry followed, to enjoy the completion of his hopes. The company

company then remained not long, but taking a friendly leave of each other, parted, with numberless good wishes for the happy pair, while I, being shewn to my room, soon sunk into repose. . .

CHAP. V.

READER, thou hast left this family in peace: part asleep and dead to every care; part awake, alive to every joy. What storm shall disturb the first; what blast destroy the last? Thou shouldst know, that life unmixed with sorrow, is not the lot of man. Alas! it seems a dream, whose objects are but phantoms that float about the brain and act without a cause; 'tis death alone can wake us into knowledge and unfold the riddle.

The shrieks of a female roused me in the morning, when, starting from my bed, I dressed myself in part, and apprehensive of danger, seized an iron rod that stood at hand, then flew to the spot

spot whence the sound proceeded. It was the chamber of Henry, whom I found struggling to free himself from the hold of two ruffians in sailor's habits, while three others, with a midshipman, stood by, with each a drawn hanger. The distressed bride had fainted in her father's arms, and the poor old lady was on her knees, imploring, in wild accents, the pity of our disturbers."

"A press-gang, my friend," cried Harry, seeing me approach—"let me loose," said he to them, in a tone of anguish, on beholding the situation of his wife—"let me loose, and I will follow you to death."

"No, Sir," roared out one of the fellows, who grasped him, "the King wants good seamen; we have been long on the hunt for you, and are now

com-

come seven miles to make good our chace, and bl—t my e—s if you sheer off from our grapple now, so about ship."

Enraged at the barbarity of his conduct, and losing all fear in the cause of my friend, I struck a blow at the ruffian's head, that brought him to the ground, when Henry, finding one arm at liberty, sent his companion reeling to the farther end of the room, then springing upon the officer, attempted to wrest his weapon. In the mean time I stood not idle; but aimed another blow at the first of the gang within my reach, when, before it took effect, I received a cut from one behind, upon my shoulder, which totally deprived my arm of its use, and it fell nerveless to my side, while the rod dropped to the ground. Another of them, in front, seeing me incapable

incapable of resistance, struck me with such effect upon my forehead, that I lay senseless at his feet.

On revival, I found myself in bed, and under the care of old Mr. Mainland and Mr. Bowman, who were weeping over my wounds, and endeavouring to stop their bleeding. Shortly a surgeon arrived, who, on examining them, assured me they were not mortal. The one on my shoulder, he observed, was the most dangerous, being cut to the bone, which was injured by the blow: the other, on my forehead, would be troublesome, he said, but was by no means so bad as the first.

This was no sooner known to the good old people, than they blessed God for the good tidings, and declared they should forever regard me as their own child. I eagerly inquired for Henry, but was answered only by tears.

" He is gone," said I,—" he is torn from you by those living machines of execrable war; may God avenge himself on those who move them; may peace fly their presence, and war be theirs forever."

They presently informed me, that he had been torn away by the press-gang, who would convey him to their tender, from whence he promised to write the moment that pen and paper could be procured.

" But where," demanded I, " where is his wife?"

" She," said Mr. Mainland, " after vainly attempting to be carried with her husband, to whom she clung with all her strength, was torn from him by two of the sailors, while the rest dragged him off till he was out of sight, and

and beyond the reach of her cries; then leaving her, they followed their unfeeling companions. She is now upon her bed, indulging in sorrow."

The surgeon having dressed my wounds, gave directions for my treatment and diet, and left me for that day. Shortly after, my friends left me to repose; but my reflections and my pains were too poignant to admit of sleep. I lay revolving on my own situation, and lamenting that of the generous Henry. The apprehensions of remaining a burthen on this good family, made me very uneasy: "and yet," thought I, "such hearts as theirs delight in the offices of humanity, and are happy in its practice."

The surgeon attended again next day, and re-dressed my wounds, assuring me there would be no danger, provided

vided I adhered to his prescriptions; which, by the bye, were more rigid than I could have wished. My friends, in the mean time, shewed me every mark of tender regard which benevolence could suggest.

The amiable consort of Henry remained as closely confined to her room as myself, and could hardly be prevailed upon to accept of any nourishment. She frequently inquired for me, and expressed a desire to converse, or rather, to condole with me; but, for a time her parents denied it, lest on beholding the effects of my friendship for Henry, her affliction should be augmented.

Old Mr. Mainland came daily to visit me, and always brought some present, which, though I could not partake of, I seldom refused; judging it

it would be a disappointment to his kindness. In short, he and his friends appeared emulous to make me happy.

Three weeks had elapsed, and Henry had not been heard of; when the distress of his friends increased to such a degree, that his father, in the hopes of alleviating it, resolved to go in quest of him, when, a few hours before his intended departure, they received two letters, one for his father, the other for his wife. They stated, that being conveyed on board the tender, he offered to enter, but, notwithstanding, was confined between decks, among several other unfortunate young men. There he remained a fortnight, denied the satisfaction, though he begged it with tears in his eyes, of writing to his friends. At last, being chosen from among his fellow-prisoners, he was sent on board a fifty-gun ship, the captain of which,

which, to his great happiness, proved to be well known to him, having sailed in his company to the East Indies. The consequence was, his immediate admission to the rank of master's mate, and receiving the kindest treatment. But all the interest of his commander could not procure his discharge, so greatly were they in want of experienced seamen; however, he was promised, that, on the first opportunity, he should have leave to visit his friends. He made particular inquiries after me, and hoped he should have my esteem and friendship through life.

Our fears for his safety now being, in part, removed, and finding him to be in a respectable situation, our care also lessened by degrees. Mrs. Mainland inproved in health and spirits, from the hope of again having her Henry restored to her arms.

In about a fortnight after these tidings, I was in a condition to walk abroad and enjoy the air. My time was divided between the two families of Mainland and Bowman, which, but that I knew no such trivial motives urged them, I should have thought, strove to outvie each other in their offices of friendship to me.

Mrs. Mainland shewed a sisterly esteem for me, and would often be the companion of my walks round the fields, where we would dwell on the beauties of Nature, and praise her rich variety. At times, we conversed upon the manners of mankind. She would listen to the events I had passed, and my conclusive observations, with a deep attention. When I spoke of London, she seemed particularly anxious and inquisitive; but I carefully avoided poisoning her mind with a flattering description

scription of its seductive pleasures: "They are evanescent," I would say, "and will fade, in comparison with the solid joy and sweet content of a country life; for the farther we remove from the city's strife, the nigher are we to that happy state which poets define—THE GOLDEN AGE."

Several weeks had now passed away, without hearing farther from Henry; at last there came another letter, dated from Cork; in which he informed, that a few days after his first writing, his ship put to sea, and had been cruizing off Ireland; that she was then in Cork harbour, whence they were ordered to protect a fleet of merchantmen up the Straits; after which, he hoped to return home, and enjoy those blessings he so anxiously wished for. The captain, he said, continued to treat him with the utmost kindness, and had promised

mised his interest in getting him promoted to the rank of lieutenant: "And surely," concluded he, "my dear Anne will be proud on seeing me return an officer of the British Navy."

Though this intelligence by no means banished her concern, yet, it was greatly meliorated by the consideration of his being in health, and accompanied by success.

My wounds, by this time, being sufficiently healed, I began to think and speak of my departure; though these worthy people, whom I loved as parents, pressed me to remain till the arrival of Henry. I dispatched three or four letters to as many Managers, with offers of my services; but waiting till my patience was exhausted, and receiving no answer, I resolved to set forward in a few days, and trust to chance.

Previous to the execution of this determination, I waited on the surgeon, and demanded his bill, full of apprehension, lest it should exceed my power of discharging; when he informed me, that it had been paid by Mr. Maitland. On desiring to know the amount, he answered, five pounds fifteen and sixpence. Taking leave of him, I instantly repaired to the old gentleman, and found him in his orchard, enjoying his pipe and glass, under a mulberry-tree.

"I find," said I, "that you have anticipated me in the surgeon's bill; which I hear amounts to more than I possess. I will not offend you, therefore, by offering you a part of it; but hope to refund the whole on the first improvement of my fortune; for the obligations I have already received from you, are too great, and infinitely beyond my ability to compensate."

The

The old gentleman taking my hand, and fixing a stedfast look upon me returned,

"My dear boy, I was thinking of thee just as thou arrived'st: thou hast ventured thy life in defending my Harry: for him hast thou suffered a painful illness; for him wilt thou carry those marks of friendship to the grave; and for his sake hast thou, perhaps, been checked in the pursuit of a better fortune, which may now be lost. I hear that thou art about to leave us; perhaps for ever. Do not be offended at my plainness, then, but forget the surgeon's bill; put this in thy pocket, without a word, and remember the claims thou hast upon my future gratitude. My humble doors shall be ever open to thee, and such as I possess shall be thy own.

Unfolding the paper which he had given me, I perceived it was a twenty pound bank-note.

"I am sufficiently happy," replied I, placing it on the table, "in having so excellent a friend to depend on in time of need; but I must by no means accept this, and you will cease to press me, when I swear by Heaven I will not. The first part of your kindness still remains—I mean the surgeon's bill, with every other instance of your generosity; and, to lessen your concern for me, I do assure you that the stock of money I possess is competent to my present wants."

The good man, with infinite reluctance, re-pocketed the note. We then remained in conversation till dark, when we withdrew into the house and supped.

Next day, walking on the road, and pondering on the means of procuring an engagement, I overtook a waggon, loaded with scenery and various appendages of the stage. Perceiving a decent youth in company with the driver, I immediately concluded him to be charged with the care of them; accordingly, advancing to him, I demanded whither he was bound, at the same time excusing my curiosity, by saying I was in the profession. On this he shook me by the hand, and answered, that he was going to a large Fair about eleven miles farther, that was held in the environs of a populous town, where they would make a month's stay. I then asked whether they were in want of performers? he replied yes; for that his uncle, who was the Manager, had been some time back wishing for two of respectable talents. "I will attend him then," said I; "therefore give

give me his name, with that of the town." He did so, and advised me to be there three days from that time, when his uncle would be ready to treat with me. I then hastened to my friends, to whom I related my adventure and intention.

When the time of departure arrived, they flocked round me, shewing thereat every demonstration of regret. We embraced in tears, and exchanged the most fervent promises of lasting regard. "Farewell!" said they; "we shall never cease to think of you, and never think of you without affection." Then, with my little bundle in one hand, and a stick in the other, I once more sought my wayward fortune, from whose winding chase I had been delayed four months.

Without meeting any thing worth notice,

notice, I reached my place of destination about seven in the evening. I found the town crowded with holiday people, who seemed preparing for the Fair, which was to open on the following day. Every public-house was filled by people from all parts of the surrounding country; so that none could accommodate me with a lodging; I was therefore obliged to pace the streets, and inquire at every door, till at last, I secured myself a garret in a private house.

Next day I went, in good time, to the theatre, which I found situated in a field adjoining the main road, and about half way between the town and Fair. It was a poor temporary erection of wood, the front being painted in a paltry manner, in imitation of stone, and its whole appearance serving to give the beholder a most despicable opinion of

of its occupants. While I stood gazing at it, I perceived the youth who had given me the direction busied in fastening up a green curtain at the door-way, for the purpose of parting the box and pit entrance. Making up to him, I demanded if his uncle was within. He answered in the affirmative, and immediately conducted me to his presence, saying, "This, Sir, is the gentleman concerning whom I spoke to you."

"Leave us to consider awhile," returned he, with all the majesty he could assume. Struck with his manner, I immediately marked him as a character. He was of a middle age, plump and well made, but his features labouring at a gravity that excited laughter; for they were formed by Nature for a continual grin, while his eyes seemed in search of admiration.

Having made a proper survey of me, he broke forth as follows: "A—have you, Sir,—a—played in any a—*respectable* company?—for mine, I assure ye, is not of the common order."

I have performed in *very* respectable companies, Sir," replied I, casting a significant look around the house. On which he desired me to give him a specimen of my abilities. I directly spoke the dagger soliloquy of *Macbeth*, which, when I had finished, he observed, was, certainly, *on the whole*, deserving praise; but, that there were a few errors, which he should take some future opportunity of eradicating from me. I answered, that I should at all times be proud of his corrections. He then said, he should try me in a first-rate character, which, if I filled well, should remain in my possession—"But what salary do you expect?" concluded he.

After

After a little consideration, I answered, " A guinea a week."

" A guinea! a d—m—n!" exclaimed he, and starting back three paces—" a guinea a week, young man; why, surely, you have been schooled upon the London boards, in modesty; but speak again, my dear lad, speak again—I certainly have misunderstood ye." I then begged him to name his own terms, which, if possible, I would accept.

" Why, then," returned he, " half that sum is at your service."

" You mean, of course, to *board* me then," said I.

" Board you!" cried he again—" no, I would rather submit to your enormous demand than board a hungry player."

" And

" And I would rather submit," returned I, " to be a Merry Andrew at the Fair, than accept your hungry allowance." Saying which, I turned about, and was preparing to go, without farther altercation, when he called me back, and after several proposals and rejections, agreed to give me thirteen shillings, which I thought proper to accept.

The characters being all cast for the play of that evening, he desired me to take a part in the pantomime, and the following night that of *Richard the Third.*

I now took a particular survey of the house, which was lined with matting. The only division of the pit and gallery was by a wooden bar that went across. The boxes appeared to have been flour bins, such as are used by bakers, and

were now adorned with green baize. The stage was raised about two feet from the ground, and so extremely loose, that it seemed entirely adapted for tumblers. I could find no other convenience for the performers, than a narrow closet at the back of the scenes, which served at once for green and dressing-room to both sexes. But, however, their appearance bespoke them to be of that happy class of mortals, who bear the ills of this life with an excellent grace. They were fitted to encounter all seasons, and any one would, at first sight, have judged them to be the pupils of the profound Locke, who recommends the exposure of human bodies to all weathers; for many parts of theirs were as familiar to the sun as the hand and face. My attire was so remarkably at variance with the fashion of theirs, that they gazed upon me as if I had dropped from the clouds: their

wonder

wonder being no doubt augmented, from the knowledge of my being of the same profession."

I made my obedience to them all, and endeavoured to converse with a few; but, whether they had been awed by my superior merit, or whether (as was by far most probable) they conceived a hearty contempt for me, I cannot tell, none of them deigned to give me a civil reply, except a young lady, who differed much from the rest; and whether she presumed to place her opinion in contrast to them, or that the suavity of her temper surpassed theirs, she was altogether as polite and free to me as the rest were reserved and scornful.

This lady was pretty, genteel, and sensible, and made hereself so interesting to me, that I could not resist the temptation

temptation of requesting to conduct her home; to which she agreed with the most engaging smile. Having reached her door, a lightness of heart, to which I had been long a stranger, prompted me to solicit her company that afternoon to the Fair. "Most gladly," said she: "do not disappoint me; I will prepare for your coming, for I am fond of mixing among the happy."

After dinner I accordingly returned to her, and found she had attired herself in a very graceful style, well knowing, as most of the sex do, that the way to men's hearts is through their eyes. We instantly set forward on our excursion, and as we walked she entertained me with the characters of our company, making slight observations upon their professional abilities, which she held in very little respect. She informed

formed me, that she took the lead in comedy, farce and pantomime; in the latter of which she was always the Columbine, and was likewise the principal dancer. She confessed her having been seduced by an actor, who afterwards deserted her for a rich prize whom he married; that her friends then refusing to receive her, she adopted this mode of existence in preference to any other.

Thus did she amuse me on the road, till the sound of trumpets, French-horns, and the bawling of showmen, pronounced the Fair at hand; and in a few minutes we were in the midst of it.

It was on a spacious common, open on all sides to the surrounding country. I instantly felt my spirits rise to meet the general joy that sat smiling on each countenance; and Miss Hopkins (the name of my companion) danced as she went.

went. Indeed every object was so full of life, that it was impossible to escape the welcome contagion; and I should have pitied him who could. The booths formed a circle of a full mile in circumference; each of them was honoured with a flag at top, and plenty of company within, where might be seen husbands, wives, children and servants, in unrestrained mirth and good fellowship. Numbers of shows were promiscuously placed about, and all of them filled with admiring audiences. In short, the whole presented a picture of universal glee.

On our rounds, we observed a large circle of people gazing at a number of others, who were amusing themselves in a country-dance, enlivened by a hand-organ and tambourin. Miss Hopkins, without saying a word, pulled me to the bottom, and placing herself opposite

posite to me, desired I would prepare for my turn. Being by no means in a humour to deny her request, I nodded assent, and shortly we began to move. Our style differed so greatly from the rest, that it drew the attention of all, and brought forth repeated bursts of applause. I was myself charmed with my partner, who displayed uncommon agility, accompanied by a considerable share of grace, while I gave full scope to all that I was master of.

The dance had no sooner ended, than the rest surrounded us, and declared we should not depart till we honoured them by accepting a treat. They accordingly conducted us, in triumph, to the noblest booth in the Fair, where they called for as noble an entertainment. During our repast some of them formed another dance, as if emulous to excite our notice, while we sat like

canopied

canopied sovereigns, dispensing our approbation of their loyalty. We remained in their company till it was time for us to return, when we parted, with many expressions of kindness on both sides.

About a hundred yards beyond the borders of the fair, we descried a vast concourse of people surrounding a man in black, elevated above their heads on a kind of rostrum, and who, by his gesticulations appeared to be haranguing them in a very energetic manner. Anxious to know his subject, we turned and approached him; but had scarcely reached his auditors before he beckoned to and addressed us thus:

" Come—come hither, ye children of impurity, begotten by Sin, and swimming in her poisoned streams!

come

come and listen to the voice of thy Maker, which shall purge away the filth that now clings to thy souls, and which it has gathered in the contaminated atmosphere of yonder mart of hell, where Satan revels triumphant, like the rampant lion, devouring by multitudes the flocks of the unholy.— Ye children of frailty!—ye giddy fools, who dive headlong into seas of brimstone, or boiling oil, when ye think ye are sporting on a sunny bank, have ye no thought of eternity?—must the Oracles of Heaven brawl out till they are hoarse, with a voice of warning and salvation, without being regarded?— Ye mites of ungodliness—ye elephants of iniquity, ye will one day hear that voice, when your souls, crusted round by the scales of unrighteousness, shall tremble, and wish it had ears to hear.— But go—go, if ye will not stop in the presence of the wise; go and wallow in

your dirt—go, get drunk in the cup of Beelzebub: dance to the music of Belial, and die in the arms of fornication! —go, I say, and faint on the bosoms of the wh—s of hell!"

He had no sooner finished his climax, than two constables forced their way through the crowd, and seized the holy orator, who, finding himself in danger, strove to move his hearers to his rescue; when one of the officers, perhaps apprehensive of the charms of his eloquence, mounted the rostrum, and producing a warrant, spoke as follows:

"Countrymen, I hope none of you are weak enough to become the followers of this hypocrite, who is nothing but a wolf in sheep's clothing, and, under the pretence of godliness, will pick your pockets, dishonour your wives, and seduce your daughters. Look

Look here, behold this warrant for his apprehension. He has infamously abused a good, but simple man, who took him into his house, relieved his wants, and cherished him. He has broken the heart of this man; he has taught his son to rob him, while he has purloined the articles of theft; and seduced and diseased the daughter. Now, let me ask you—is this a man who can shew you the way to Heaven?"

The crowd immediately dispersed, with shame, leaving the constables to carry off their hero, while Miss Hopkins and myself hurried to the theatre.

CHAP. VI.

WE found the house so full, that many persons were disappointed of admission. The play was ready, and waited but for my companion, who had scarcely time to dress before she was called upon.

I had now an opportunity of judging of her performance, which infinitely surpassed my expectations. It was vivacious and easy, and would have ensured applause before the most rigid assemblage of critics. The rest of the company were really unexceptionable; for they seemed moved by one soul; and any body would have imagined them to have sworn not to excel each other; their philosophy disdaining all passion,

passion, and their genius all point. Not a hand of their audience moved to approve, unless when the author's merit burst through their tameness.

My part in the pantomime was the Fop, a rejected lover of Columbine, in which I acquitted myself to the satisfaction of our Manager, who observed, it was *very fair.*

I had agreed to see Miss Hopkins home; accordingly, the moment she was ready, we set off together.

My interest in this young lady increased every moment from our first meeting, and had now risen to a very eminent degree. I began to indulge in thoughts which had been long strangers to me. The wine I had drank at the Fair, no doubt, tended to exhilarate my spirits, which, together with some very inqui-

inquisitive looks of hers, and a yielding air, conspired to set me in a flame. All the way to her lodgings, my arms were encircled round her waist, and the darkness of the night precluding the impertinent observations of man, our lips met each others with peculiar freedom, till we arrived at her door.

" We must not part, my dear Miss Hopkins," sighed I.

" You know best," returned she, with an archness that banished all ceremony.

" Then the devil take me," exclaimed I, " and let me suffer all the torments of the Methodist's threats, if I desert so sweet a partner."

" Heaven forbid you should," said she, and opening the door with a key, hurried

hurried up to her room, while I closely followed her.—And now, reader, thou art, no doubt, watching my every motion; but do not be rude—the curtains are drawn—good night.

In the morning, a little girl came into the room, and throwing back the curtains of our bed, demanded whether Miss Hopkins would have milk for breakfast; but she being fast asleep, I raised up my head, and, in a peevish tone, bid her begone. The child no sooner saw a strange face, and heard a strange voice, than she screamed out, and running with all speed down to her mother, cried out: "O mother, mother, such a thing! there's a man in bed, and Miss Hopkins is dead! O, he has kill'd Miss Hopkins!"

"Ch—st of his mercy forbid!" exclaimed the good woman. "Come along

along with me, child; we will raise the neighbours." Her tongue then ceased, and immediately after I heard the door shut. Foreseeing the consequences, I waked Miss Hopkins, and related the circumstance to her. "Remember," said she, with a happy presence of mind—"Remember, that you are my husband, and that you arrived last night, and mean to remain here."

We had not finished dressing ourselves before the landlady returned, accompanied by six or seven men, one of whom, having reached the stairs, roared out,

"Go thee first, Tomkins; cock thy blunderbuss, and mind how thee open'st the door; for mayhap a may knocken thee down: who knows what bloody weapons a may have, or what a bloody-minded fellow a may be—up, my lad, and we'll follow thee."

The

The formidable cavalcade accordingly marched, in slow order, up stairs; and, having reached the top, commenced a heavy battery against our door.

I actually began to feel some apprehensions for my life, imagining they might fire without ascertaining the guilt of their object; on which I desired Miss Hopkins would address them, and do away their false alarm. She, in compliance, began with,

" In the name of peace, what is the meaning of this unusual noise, good people ?"

"'Halloo!" bawled out one of the champions—" who be'est thee ?—Pray an't there a bloody murderer in this yere room ? and han't he slaughter'd a young oman that lodges yere ?"

 " Good

" Good J—s!" returned she, " what murder and nonsense are you prating about? I am the young woman you are speaking of, and here is no other murderer but what your own mad brains have created; I beg, my good friends, you will not molest a woman in her own apartment, but return home and send Mrs. Jacobs, my landlady, to me."

" Why, Miss Hopkins," cried the latter from the bottom of the stairs, " what, be'est thee alive in earnest! Ch—st be blest! but an't you the devil's imp feigning her voice, and colleagued with the murderer?"

" Dong it, well said," roared one of the countrymen—" mayhap a be the devil: don't let's go till we are sure; so open the door, and shew yer horns and cloven feet."

" Fools,"

" Fools," cried Miss Hopkins, " I am neither the devil nor his imp, but a mortal being like yourselves: I am not dressed yet, and will not open my door till you are gone: if you persist farther to disturb me, or to force it from the lock, the law shall teach you better manners than to intrude on the privacy of a woman."

At the word *law*, they tumbled down as though the rod of justice was already at their back, and rushed immediately out of the house.

The coast being clear, we deemed it advisable to inform the landlady of the whole affair, keeping to the story of my being her husband.

" And why not," said I, " have I not the same regard? let me have the same enjoyments too: our fortunes are the

the same; let us combine them; they will become lighter, and life will pass away more gaily."

"Be it so, with all my heart," replied she, smiling, and immediately went down to establish the story.

She presently returned, informing me that the good lady fell readily into a belief of what she had advanced; and admitted the strict propriety of our living together; but nothing tended farther to convince her, than a voluntary promise of raising our rent.

Things being thus adjusted, we sat down to breakfast, and expressed our mutual pleasure at the scheme we had arranged. Our meal being over, I went to my former lodgings, settled, and brought away the few articles I possessed.

At eleven o'clock we went arm in arm to the theatre, where, with the most steady assurance, we battled all the secret laughter and comments of our company, for we foresaw the impossibility of keeping our connexion a secret from them: nor was Miss Hopkins in the least degree disconcerted at the publicity of it.

I could not but admire the state of importance which the Manager kept up during rehearsal. He would not suffer the slightest omission of any part of the performance, even to the movement of the scenery. He two or three times made me repeat a sentence, insisting upon the emphasis being placed according to his own suggestions; which, by the bye, were extremely *outré*: however, I did not think it worth while to oppose his extravagance, though I took the

the liberty of forgetting it at the representation.

After dinner we again went to the Fair; but purposely avoided the honours we had entered into on the preceding day; yet, notwithstanding our studied evasion, there were several who recognized us, and testified their remembrance by nods and smiles.

During our perambulations a boy presented us with a play-bill, a full yard in length, and to the following purport:

THIS NIGHT WILL BE PERFORMED,
BY MR. HINDES'S COMPANY,
ALLOWED TO BE THE FIRST IN ENGLAND,
THE HISTORICAL AND TRAGICAL
PLAY OF
KING RICHARD THE THIRD;
OR, THE BLOODY CROOK-BACK'D
TYRANT:

IN

IN WHICH WILL BE SHEWN THE MURDER OF KING HENRY, AND THE SMOTHERING OF THE INNOCENT YOUNG PRINCES OF THE BLOOD, WITH THE DEATH OF THE CRUEL TYRANT, AND CORONATION OF HENRY THE SEVENTH.

THE WHOLE TO CONCLUDE WITH A GRAND PROCESSION OF KETTLE-DRUMS, TRUMPETS, FRENCH-HORNS, AND THE VICTORIOUS ARMY.

Then followed the list of characters, with the performers' names, and a long and curious description of the pantomime, which was to be repeated.

We were at the theatre in good time, and soon prepared for business. Miss Hopkins was the *Lady Ann*, which she played with much effect. I went through my part with as little nicety as fear; bustling on at a most prepos-

terous rate. But, nevertheless, I failed not to bring down the *natives*, or, in plainer words, the applause of my audience, who doubtless thought me one of the greatest geniuses that ever appeared in those parts before. Once at my exit, amidst the thunders of their approbation, Mr. Hindes seized me by the hand, and cried out in exultation,

"There, Sir, you see the effects of my tuition; you will be sure to please while you act from my instruction. I rejoice in your success, and am heartily glad that you are not above my advice and experience: it is the only way for a young man to get on." I ever after found, that he attributed all my success to his own ingenuity, and though I differed from him in every point, he still would claim the honour of my praise.

Our

Our business of the night being over, Miss Hopkins and myself retired home. I felt a secret satisfaction in the possession of her; for it seemed a revenge on the perfidy of Caroline, who I renounced for ever; though at times, a picture of her former virtue would present itself, and leave an impression of melancholy behind it.

The Fair continued two days longer, to our Manager's satisfaction, and, for a week after, the theatre filled in a very ample manner; but after that period, began to slacken, and towards the close of his license, it scarcely answered its nightly expences.

From hence, we removed to a town thirty miles off; small, and extremely mean in its appearance, where we staid near two months, with miserable encou-

ragement; experienceing nothing but poverty and contempt.

I was poor myself; but yet, my state was affluence, when compared with many of my brethren's; several of whom had not more than from eight to ten shillings a week. Their attire was but a little degree above that of a common beggar; except, that it was put on with more care, or perhaps with somewhat more regard to cleanliness. Happy were they, who, with a threadbare great coat, could hide the ravages of time upon their under garments, and prevent the mockery of their observers. I have seen them mix in the lowest dregs of society, where they have subjected themselves to every degradation for the poor, yet, to them rich reward, of sharing their bread and cheese: there have they answered the

commands of their rude companions, by singing, dancing, and inventing tales: stretching their wearied faculties for some strange conceit; and when they have failed to please, the coarsest reproaches and abuse have been their return.

I often sickened at the prospect of their distress, and frequently resolved to quit them and their profession for ever; but the dread of meeting no other kind of employment, and some little hopes of improvement in this, withheld me.

I had written for a better engagement to two or three superior companies; but having received no answer, was on the point of making a personal search, when a secret from the Manager's nephew checked that intention. It was that his uncle, at the next town w-

shoul[d]

should proceed to, would join another Manager, and combine the two properties; that in consequence, we should have a more respectable circuit, every thing would be improved, and each individual benefited. Pleased at the young man's information, I resolved to wait the event.

Our time being expired, we departed; every heart being lighter in the hope of better times under the new system, which was now made public to the whole company.

Miss Hopkins and myself, on our last journey, had travelled by the stage, but now thought proper to go as the rest did, namely, by the waggon, which conveyed the apparatus of our profession. On our way, we refreshed when the horses did, at the doors of public-houses, and on the humblest fare.

Being arrived at the end of our journey, we took leave of the rest, and secured a lodging. I had forgotten to observe, that at my first engagement in this company, I entered under the name of Clode, and was known by no other. This arose from an apprehension that my own would militate against my interest, from being known to have failed on the London boards.

Many of the profession, however, adopt this practice, from motives far different. Many performers on the London boards have sunk in oblivion their paternal names, and assumed others to which they have had no claim. Why is this? Are they ashamed of their origin? Is it infamous?—No; but it is *poor*. Poor!—poor too is the pride that can blush to own it. Their fathers, perhaps, are useful mechanics or industrious husbandmen. I think

it is Alexander Pope who says, that the man who plants an acorn in the earth, benefits mankind more than any poet who ever wrote. If this could be applied to those creative minds which give birth to noble thought, how will it stand with such as are but the hollow echoes of them? Do they fear that their merits will not outweigh their humble origin in the public estimation? Shame, shame on such deceptive conduct! and shame on the heart that can in glittering parade disown the honest author of its existence! I recommend to them the following observation of Addison:

If every man were to trace back his ancestry, none would have cause to boast or be ashamed of them. A beggar would find among his relatives, nobles, princes, and patriots; while a prince would discover beggars, robbers, and traitors.

These

These are not the precise words of that elegant writer; my memory fails me, and I cannot at present find them; but they are to the same purport.

The following day we proceeded to the theatre, and passing along, were much gratified at the appearance of the streets, houses, and inhabitants, which so greatly surpassed those we last came from. The whole company were assembled on the stage, anxiously waiting the arrival of their two Managers, who were at a public-house hard by. In half an hour they made their appearance; but judge my surprize, reader, on beholding our new master to be no other than my old acquaintance *Barbarossa*, whom I mentioned in the early part of my adventures at the Private Theatre, and with whom I had so dire a contest, respecting his fatal mispronunciation of the word *altar*.

Every

Every person present, myself excepted, received him with profound respect, which he returned in the most gracious manner. For my own part, I stood gazing upon him with a mixture of wonder and admiration. I wondered what the devil could have made him a Manager, and I admired his new and singular attire.

He wore a scarlet coat of the most formal cut, embroidered with large stripes of gold lace: his waistcoat was black sattin, and his breeches green shag. His head was ornamented with a towering peruke, and that was covered, or more properly, topped, by the most diminutive cocked-hat that ever pate was graced with. In short, his whole appearance was so metamorphosed, that, but for "a villanous hanging of his nether lip," I should not have known him.

At first I was under some apprehension, lest he should call me by my name, and so betray me. But it was unfounded; for he appeared not to retain the most distant recollection of me, nor ever after acknowledged our old acquaintance, although he was evidently conscious of it.

Mr. Hindes, after strutting about some time, gave orders for the adjustment of the theatre, which proved to be a very neat and convenient house; having a little green-room, two for dressing, and one for the Managers; with pit, box, and gallery, built in regular order.

In a little time there arrived at the door a cart-load of additional scenery, &c. the augmentation of *Barbarossa*, who, in future, I will call by his proper name, which was Vine. The fruits of the

the Vine, then, were unloaded, and brought into the august temple of the Muses with all imaginable care and expedition, where they became subject to the mechanical genius of our carpenter.

It afforded me some pleasure, to see our state promise so much improvement from this double reign. I viewed our acquisitions with much attention, and finding them painted in a very able style, became loud in the commendation of their designer and artist: the former honour Mr. Vine took to himself, and seemed not a little pleased at my approval of his taste.

The day was nearly spent in fitting up, preparatory to our opening, which was to be the following day. I joined my aid to the rest, while the Managers treated us with ale and cold meat from an adjoining house. Things being in a great

great measure completed, we left the theatre, and parted our several ways.

I took the first opportunity of entering into conversation with Mr. Hindes' nephew, respecting the story of Manager Vine, of whom I learnt the following particulars:

A relation having bequeathed him a legacy of three or four hundred pounds, he immediately formed the resolution of becoming a Manager and Proprietor; towards which intention, he employed a young man of genius to paint his scenery, and assist him in purchasing every other requisite for furnishing a small theatre. He next, by dint of a little interest and close application, obtained permission to open in two or three towns of little note. Having succeeded thus far, he summoned a meeting of his spouting friends, mad as himself,

and with them proceeded on his expedition. But, luckless chance! his benches remained empty, his friends forsook him, and, at the end of a year, he found himself alone, in the midst of his theatrical treasure, with about twenty pounds in his purse. Puzzling his poor brains for some days, in concerting new schemes, he at last resolved to join himself to some established and more successful Proprietor; when learning the admissibility of our company, he instantly proposed himself to Mr. Hindes, and was accordingly admitted to all the honours and extensive profits of his firm.

We commenced with great encouragement; the house being completely filled, and with very genteel audiences, for the first fortnight; when, finding them beginning to thin, we played but three times a week, and afterwards only twice.

Mr.

Mr. Vine invariably took the lead, both in tragedy and comedy, while I, in general, played his second. His pronunciation had by no means been refined, but was still so barbarous as frequently to, excite the risibility of his hearers; which, however, he deigned not to understand, but repeatedly attributed it to some error of another performer in the scene, whom he failed not calling to account on his exit; when he would make more noise behind, than he had before in front of the curtain.

Happily, I stood aloof from his censures; the audience receiving me so well, that he presumed not to oppose his opinion to such numbers; but I plainly perceived a secret enmity about him, and at times overheard him whispering to my prejudice, especially on those nights when our different recep-

tions

tions were so glaringly in my favour. However, as he affected a shew of civility towards me, I did not appear to notice it.

He was, of all men, the most destitute of grace I ever saw, both in his delivery and action; the last of which was at times so offensive as hardly to be borne, particularly by the female class of his audience. He had a vile knack of thrusting his two forefingers into the flap of his breeches, and sometimes his whole hand. Another was, his constantly turning that part, which I will not prophane my book by naming, towards the front of the house, and scarcely ever would he shew his face, unless he had some favourite sentence to deliver, when he would advance to the verge of the orchestra, and roar out to the astonishment of all hearers. Such were his eccentricities, that half the

people came to laugh at him, and the audience have frequently, in the midst of scenes that should call forth tears and sighs, been in one general burst of merriment. The town, however, at last became weary of this burlesque tragedy, of which they shewed their contempt, by a total desertion of the theatre.

This circumstance Mr. Vine attributed to nothing less than the indifferent acting of nearly all the rest of our company. In consequence of which, he and his brother Manager consulted together, and, in the end, resolved upon writing immediately for some new performers. This task being assigned to *Barbarossa*, he dispatched letters to some of his old spouting friends in London, summoning them to meet him in readiness at our next town.

 I had

I had here the choice of a benefit, but, fearful of being a loser, thought proper to decline it. Miss Hopkins, however, acted on the contrary, and happily succeeded so far as to clear six guineas, which was owing to her personal application among the town's-people, who possessed more gallantry than to refuse a lady, whose merit they had acknowledged, and from whom they had received considerable amusement.

While one morning walking a little way in the country, my constant custom in fine weather, I saw approaching me two curious figures, so strangely contrasted, that I knew not which to admire most. The one short and fat, was dressed in an old suit of black velvet, with broad gold lace, a bob-wig and cocked hat. The other tall and lusty, in a plain suit, but ragged all over; and both

were

were mounted upon jack-asses, bridled and saddled.

I could not forbear stopping to survey them, and guess my surprize on discovering the first to be my old acquaintance and brother actor, Joey Mason, who no sooner recognized me, than he saluted me with a hearty shake of the hand.

On demanding whither he was bound, he answered, for a new engagement. " For you must know," said he, " that I have left Master Bantom, who is both rogue and fool, and if you will turn back with us, I will relate the whole story to you." I willingly agreed to his proposal, and proceeding towards the town, he began as follows:

" You see, Mr. Templeton, there lately came to play with us for one

week, a London actor and his wife. So, forsooth, to accommodate their mightinesses, every thing must be turned topsy-turvy. And above all, the green-room must be made their dressing-room, and we fairly kicked out from the right of entering it. But do you think I bore this like an owl? No!—I let things go on till the curtain was ready to draw, when I called my friends together, and addressed them in a very brilliant speech; telling them, if they would submit to such tumble-me-down treatment, they deserved to sweep the stage as long as life should last. What," said I, "is it not enow that these hungry wolves, let loose from their golden dens, shall come and plunder all your stores, and leave the empty vessels for ye to lick your starveling tongues in; but must they drive ye from your haunts, and laugh at your humility? Shall they tumble ye into the

the mire, and then grin at your distress? Say, are ye not men, like them? Are ye not actors, like them? and are ye not Apollo's children too, like them? or are ye but his bastards? Shame on ye all—take courage—hunt these turtle-fed blood-suckers from your temple, and reign there your own masters."

This inspired harangue, Mr. Templeton, you may be sure, had the desired effect: they all ran into the green-room, turned out those selfish prowlers, and stood for their rights."

"This is every a, b, c of it true," cried the companion of Mr. Mason, in an Irish accent, observing he had concluded. "This is every letter true! and I'll tell you a bit more, as true as that: you see, honey, master Londoner was growing impertinent, and calling us beggars, and raggamuffins, and such like civil phrases;

phrases; so says I, let me try if ragged honesty can't do as good an action as gilded pride. With that, I took his handsome body into my arms, and threw him plump into the pit, by way of washing off his sins; and Mr. Bantom making a great botheration about the matter, I threw him after; so you see, fearing the business would not be made up in a hurry, my friend and myself left the place, and are now going to another."

Pleased with their conduct, I accompanied them to a good house in the town, where we spent a very jovial night, and parted highly satisfied with each other's company.

Our stay at this place was ten weeks, and notwithstanding the poor houses towards the latter part, the Proprietors, on the whole, reaped a good harvest.

We

We next proceeded to a town forty miles hence, where a mart was then held. Miss Hopkins being now flush of money, scorned the lowly manner in which she had last travelled, and insisted on either the inside of a stage, or a post-chaise. Accordingly we chose the former, and set off by five in the morning.

CHAP. VII.

THE coach stopped at noon in a neat village, where the passengers alighted and dined at an inn.

Our meal ended, we were returning to our seats, when at the door a person accosted me with, " Bless me, Mr. Templeton! is it you I see? Examining his features, I immediately recognized Mr. Wilmot, the friend of Caroline and myself. Seizing his hand, I expressed the joy I felt on seeing him, and asked concerning his family and fortune. He by turns surveyed Miss Hopkins, whose arm was in mine, and myself, for the space of some seconds; then with a very serious tone said,

" Where

" Where is Caroline?"

" Caroline," answered I, " is false. She has proved herself unworthy both of your respect and my love."

" Tell me," demanded he, " how has Caroline Sterling proved herself unworthy?"

" By deserting a husband whose happiness was centered in her affection, and flying to unbridled vice," returned I. At that moment the coachman interrupted us; swearing, that unless we resumed our places, he would instantly drive off without us.

" My friend," said I, to Mr. Wilmot; who stood fixed in silent astonishment, " such is the depravity of human nature! Caroline is false!" then handing in Miss Hopkins, I leaped after her.

 " I'll

"I'll not believe it," cried Mr. Wilmot, "though an angel came from Heaven to tell me so. She has been basely wronged by you, or some one else. Caroline is as innocent as the babe new born."

The coach now moved, and I heard no more. But it was enough. A thousand reflections crowded on my mind, and occupied it all the rest of my journey. Nothing but Caroline was present to me, and she appeared in all her virtue. I thought of the joys her presence had afforded me, and traced back every circumstance of her conduct.

"It is impossible," said I in my heart, "it is impossible that Caroline can have wronged me."

What an atom; what a shadow will

sometimes bias the mind of man. His opinion is ever on the float, and Reason in vain attempts to bind it to her laws. A dream had filled me with jealousy— the voice of reproof with melancholy.

I now drooped my head in silence, and resigned myself to imagination. All those fatal ideas which possessed me at her loss, revived—again I saw her torn from me by force; or calling me to rescue her from accidental death— "I will mourn for thee, my Caroline, for ever!" sighed I, as the coach stopped at the end of our journey.

I lifted up my eyes, and fixed them on Miss Hopkins—the sight was no longer grateful to them, and I wished they had never beheld her. Yet still she deserved my attention: I leaped into the inn-yard, and assisted her to alight also. We paid our carriage, and

going into the house, ordered tea, which was immediately brought. A long silence ensued on both sides, when she at last began with:

"So, it seems, you are married, Mr. Clode—Templeton I mean; for that, it appears, is your proper name."

"I have been married," returned I, in a grave tone, "some time, and to a woman I adored; but whose memory I have basely wronged."

"You shall wrong her no more on my account, Sir," said she, with a look and accent very unusual to her.

"What do you mean, Miss Hopkins?" demanded I.

"I mean," replied she, "that we part this very hour."

I know not whether this arose from her respect to an injured wife, or a jealousy on hearing me name her with such emotion; but I conceive the latter reason most probable: however, it amply answered my wish.

"The obligations I owe you, Miss Hopkins," resumed I, "shall never be forgotten: you are the mistress of your own conduct, and no person has a title to dispute your will; but, before we part, suffer me to assist you in procuring a convenient lodging."

Silence again ensued, nor was it broken by either till the tea equipage was removed, when I observed that we had better commence our inquiries while day-light remained. At this she arose, and answered she was ready: then discharging the waiter, and taking up her portmanteau, which contained both our

apparel,

apparel, I proceeded into the street, while she followed me in silence.

In less than half an hour we found a lodging, which she said would fully answer her purpose; and being left together, she immediately unpacked her things, and, separating mine, presented them to me with much affected carelessness, thanking me for the trouble I had been at on her account.

" We shall never be less than friends, Miss Hopkins," said I.

" No," returned she, " why should we? we have done each other no injury." We then bade adieu, and parted.

" O Caroline!" exclaimed I, turning from the house—" dear Caroline! where shall I find such perfections as were combined in thee?"

Being in no humour to be nice in the choice of a lodging for myself, and meeting one at the second public-house I inquired at, I instantly agreed for it at a fair price, supped early, and retired to bed.

Next morning I went to the theatre, which was in a street that opened into the market-place, where the mart was held. It had a good brick front, and a portico at the entrance. I found all the company assembled in the green-room, with the addition of three gentlemen and a lady, whom I discovered were the persons Mr. Vine had sent for from London. With these the two Managers were in close conversation, paying them many marks of outward respect, such as bowing, smiling, and whispering. After a considerable time being passed in this manner, they separated, and began to distribute themselves

selves about the room. Presently two of these newly engaged approached towards me, and, while passing, one of them staring in my face with matchless impudence, turned to the other, and pronounced aloud, while he grinned in triumph,

"Why, d—n me, that's Templeton, who was damn'd at Drury."

Shocked at this unprovoked insolence, I immediately rose, and stepping before him, demanded what he meant. To which, with a stupidity equal to his impertinence, he answered,

"What's the matter, Sir, what's the matter; can't a man make his own observations without being called to account?"

"It would be an endless labour," said

said I, " to watch your observations; for a person so employed must have the rod constantly in his hand to flog you into manners."

" You are not going to flog me, I hope," cried he.

" That," returned I, " depends on your future behaviour; but rest assured, that one consideration alone can secure you from my resentment—your insignificance." He then, with an affected laugh, turned upon his heel, and strutted off.

This altercation had been heard by all present, and at its conclusion some took part with the stranger, while others applauded the spirit I had shewn. Shortly after I heard the name of Templeton buzzed about the room, while every eye was fixed upon me, as a new being;

being; some with contempt, others with respect.

I heard one gentleman in particular, a Mr. Broom, who had been long in the company, loud in the censure of my conduct, which, he said, was ungentlemanly to our new comers. But the virulence of poor Broom arose from offended pride; for I had deprived him of his best and most favourite characters. However, he found but little account in his gallant defence, being, with three others, discharged a week aft r, as useless members. Some years after this, I saw him reduced to the humble character of a showman's Merry Andrew, but avoided discovering myself to him, lest his feelings should have suffered a pang which I had no desire to excite.

I was greatly surprized to find the

third gentleman, who came from London, apparently avoid the other two, and side with me.

"I heartily commend, Sir," said he in a low tone, "your conduct to Mr. Roberts, who, I am conscious, is very apt to be rude and vulgar." The name of this gentleman was Hawker, and I afterwards learned the cause of his aversion to the others.

They had all belonged to one private theatre, in which Messrs. Hawker and Roberts, being the leading heroes, had strongly contended for fame, and carried their rivalship to such a pitch, that even blows had more than once been the result. Another reason for inclining myself to Mr. Hawker, was a similitude of fortune; for he too had appeared at Drury Lane, and, like me, had been unsuccessful. He had been

introduced

introduced in one of the first characters of the drama, and by a great part of the public was thought to have acquitted himself with much credit; but owing to two or three of the principal performers opposing him, on account of his belonging to a private theatre, he was rejected. So at least the report went, which, however, I gave no credit to; rather believing his disappointment to have arisen from a want of those requisites which in an actor are, or ought to be, indispensible, namely, a good figure, good features, and an easy habit; whereas his figure was inelegant, his features broad, flat and unmeaning, and his gait ungraceful.

After remaining some hours amidst the bustle of preparing the scenes, &c. Mr. Hindes gave out the play of *Henry the Fourth* for the first night of opening. To Mr. Hawker he assigned the part

part of *Hotspur*; to Mr. Roberts, *Prince of Wales*, and to the other stranger *Falstaff*; while I was presented with *Sir Richard Vernon*, with which, by the bye, I was well content; for all ambition had become, extinct, since my reflections were revived on the fate of Caroline.

When the evening arrived, I paid particular attention to the above three gentlemen. Mr. Hawker played in an even manner throughout, discovering no force of conception, and as little energy of feeling.

There are parts in every prominent character, which an inferior actor will point out by mechanism; common sense, and observation inform him, that they call for some particular attempt, and he will accordingly work himself up to something like what his author means,

means, and, in part, give the required effect, so as to succeed with the undiscerning million. But the fire of genius, controlled by the finer movements of the soul, will alone gratify the man of taste and sentiment.

Mr. Hawker had not a spark of this. He gave the words, but not the character of *Hotspur*; whose wild impatience and youthful heat, he spoke like a reverend junior preparing his maiden sermon for the pulpit, and whose sole ambition rests upon the modulation of his tones.—For the other two, they were the sworn disciples of Vine; at least they had all the appearance of having studied under one master. Their whole performance was nothing but extravagance and stupidity. But yet they failed not to obtain applause; which certainly they owed to the irresistible wit of Shakespear; although they

they assumed it all to the effects of their own merit, and were, in consequence, so extremely vain and insolent, that it required an unusual forbearance of temper to pass it by unnoticed. They stood at the side wings, laughing at and ridiculing the performance of every other person, except mine, which they thought proper to pass over in silence.

The Managers were so satisfied of their abilities, and, certainly with more credit to their judgments, with those of Mr. Hawker, that they were appointed to fill the three first characters, of their own, choosing, for several following nights.

On the next representation, the young lady who accompanied them, made her *debut*. Her performance was such as neither to excite censure or admiration. She also had maintained

a sove-

a sovereign reign on the boards of a private theatre.

When we had been here about ten days, there joined us a gentleman from the stage of Covent-Garden. His sphere was low comedy. He was one of those, who, without any striking marks of excellence, was always respectable enough to ensure success. He made his entry with us in *Captain Bobadil*, which he bustled through with much effect. He then went through a train of characters from modern productions, in all of which he appeared to great advantage; but when he assumed those of Shakespear, his powers failed.

The characters of our immortal dramatist are most difficult to personate. It is because they are imaged by the hand of Nature, and can be pourtrayed only by a strength of perception equal

equal to their author's invention. It is Nature herself who speaks through every sentence, and impresses herself upon our judgment and our hearts. When, therefore, she is echoed by an unskilful actor, her force is lost: we instantly feel the subversion of her beauties, and become disgusted; whereas those monsters of vice or virtue, (for every deviation from Nature may be termed a monster), which owe their creation to indifferent writers, are above, or below our judgment. We can fix no criterion whereby to ascertain their merits, if I may so prophane that word. The comedian, therefore, may unbridle his extravagance—he may sport at large in his own ideal excellence, and fly from every law of criticism, without the danger of incurring its censure.

The above gentleman, at his benefit favoured the town with imitations of

the most celebrated actors of the day. This wretched merit, the favourite of more wretched tastes, seems waning from public approbation, and will soon, I hope, be quite banished from the stage. Such performers alone indulge in it, as possess but limited powers of their own; for genius will never stoop to be, in the words of Churchill,

"A mere, mere mimic's mimic."

This London gentleman, or, to use the title of my friend Mason, this hungry wolf, remained with us a fortnight; carrying away, what with salary and benefit, the profits of our season.

Previous to his setting off, he sold our Managers a manuscript pantomime: for, not content with the title of an actor, he aspired also to that of an author, and racked his poor brains a long time, in hopes of producing a play, or

an

an entertainment of dialogue; but, finding himself inadequate to the task, he entered into league with a dancer, by the efforts of whose mighty faculties, and his own, he succeeded in furnishing Covent-Garden with a pantomime or two; but which, indeed, were mere patch-work, torn from the hacknied works of others, and the dusty accumulations of an age. He should have known that,

"One science only can one genius fit."

My business had now become extremely light. The characters which I had hitherto sustained were taken from me and given to others, while I moved in nothing but subordinate ones, and those frequently of the meanest class. But I repined not: the ambition of my rivals was gratified, and my melancholy left to its own indulgence.

One evening, while sauntering in the mart, I was surprized on hearing my name mentioned with particular emphasis, and raising up my eyes, observed before me, Manager Vine and Miss Hopkins arm in arm. "Curiosity prompted me to listen, when I was amused with the following dialogue:

"Templeton handsome! no, Sir, I never thought him handsome, I must say."

"Why, then, what the devil could you see in his jew-looking face to admire? besides, he is so dull—was he so very generous?"

"There is no accounting for the choice of women, you know, Sir: he is ugly enough, the Lord help him! but, when first I knew him, he was by no means dull. As for his generosity, I can

I can be no judge of that, he being always too poor to shew it."

"Well, well, we shall see who is the generousest, he or I."

"O dear Sir! I hope you don't mean to compare yourself with him; I know very well who has the best soul of the two."

"I'll tell you what, Miss, we must some how or other oist im hout of hour company; but Mr. Hindes thinks so much of his d—n'd hacting, that I can't persuade im to it, though I ham for ever pointing hout is faults; and you know as well as high, that he is no hactor; so d—n him, he shall go by hook or crook."

"Why, indeed, Sir, as you have got such excellent performers in your

own friends, I do not see that he is of much use."

"No, d—n im! he is of no use at all, and if he was here, I'd tell him so to his face."

He had no sooner finished the last sentence, than I instantly sprung before them, stared in their faces, and broke into a loud laugh. Miss Hopkins had virtue enough to blush at her duplicity, while Vine put on an affected grin, and stammered out,

"Its an old saying and a true one, that listeners never hear good of themselves."

"True," returned I, looking by turns on him and Miss Hopkins—"but listeners sometimes discover hypocrisy and insignificance." I then turned away,

away, leaving them to pursue their own journey amidst their confusion, while I went back to my lodging, with another example of human instability.

It would be tedious to relate the numerous attempts of Vine, after this event, to render my situation unpleasant. He would loudly extol the performance of his friends in those characters in which I had so often been applauded—declaring they had never been so [illegible]d before. He would saddle on me the most contemptible parts of the drama, and whenever Mr. Hindes insisted on my having a leading one, was sure to deprive me of the proper dress.

These trifles by no means irritated me. I was no longer emulous to excel in the company; though at times I could not restrain that pride which be-

longs to the profession; for when a fair opportunity offered of giving scope to my powers, I never failed to triumph over my rivals, whose vanity would be tamed by the plaudits I received.

Miss Hopkins was now the acknowledged mistress of Vine, living at his lodgings. Though she was obliged, as the most successful way of pleasing her gallant, to take part against me, yet in my presence she was always silent. Indeed, spite of her faults, she was a sensible girl, and retained some respect for the feelings of a person whom she had once esteemed.

Amidst this warfare of parties, the only exertions of my spirits were, on all occasions, to revenge myself upon Vine and his two associates, whom I took every method to ridicule, and indeed there seldom was a want of opportunity.

portunity. One evening, however, I enjoyed it to the full extent.

This triumvirate being assembled in the green-room, surrounded by a number of their humble admirers and partisans, were expatiating, with wonderous ingenuity, on the merits of some eminent persons, with whom they affected to be well acquainted, when Mr. Roberts, after having enumerated several other qualifications, proceeded thus:

"Besides, we know him to be fundamentally deep in all kinds of learning, such as raterick, hellicution, the ology, and bells letters.

"O," interrupted his companion, "I have often heard of the bells letters spoken of—Pray who is the author of it?"

" I cannot exactly tell you," returned he, " who the author is ; but I know its a wonderful thing : perhaps Mr. Vine can inform us."

" The *bell letters*, gentlemen," said the Manager, casting round his eyes in order to summon the attention of all present—" the *bell letters*, gentlemen, you certainly mistake it. It means no book at all ; and I am surprized that you are no better informed about the matter. The *bell letters* are nothing more or less than those letters which the London postmen ring for after the clock has struck five, and for which they are paid a penny a-piece ; and a very pretty penny they make of their *bell letters* too, I assure ye."

I listened to his definition till he had finished, with all possible gravity, when I could contain myself no longer, but

gave

gave loose to the most unbounded laughter that my risible faculties could sustain.

Every one present expressed their astonishment at my behaviour, except the few who understood the cause of it.

Vine, who no doubt suspected his error, stood for a time in silent confusion; till, at last, hoping to redeem his credit, he exclaimed,

"Poor fellow! he's in a fit, at leas a fit of foolery and ignorance." But hi friends were more harsh in their retorts and freely vented out, "coxcomb, fool and puppy." In the mean while, I sa enjoying my triumph, crying out at intervals, "O gentle belle-lettres, suffe not my ignorance to offend you!"

Mr. Hawker, with a few others, who saw the merit of their Manager's learned elucidation, were under the necessity of retiring, for the purpose of venting their mirth in private, leaving me behind, exposed to the reproaches of my adversaries.

Vine, notwithstanding the philosophy with which he had beheld my turbulence, the following day insisted upon Mr. Hindes discharging me immediately, as a burthen to the company; and, upon his refusing to assent, a rupture had nigh taken place between them, which, however, was prevented, by Mr. Hindes' promising never to give me a leading character without the concurrence of the other. But a short time after this an event took place, that entirely banished all their differences on my account.

One night I and Roberts being on in the same scene, he gave me a wrong cue, and I, not being very perfect, was at a loss, and stood silent on the stage; on which he, stepping to the front, pronounced aloud,

"Here's a pretty actor, ladies and gentlemen; he hasn't got his part!"

I was so struck at this unparalleled assurance, that my recollection quite forsook me, and I stood exposed to the noise and hissing of the audience. Numbers of them clapped, and cried,

"Don't be alarmed—go on, Sir;" and then again the hisses overpowered me.

But whether they were at him or myself, it was impossible to ascertain, though, from the liberality of the public, it may be

be deemed the first. However, I was so completely deprived of confidence, that, leaving the scene unfinished, I flew into the green-room, panting with revenge for the coming of Roberts.

He no sooner approached than I sprung upon him, and following up my blows without mercy, he soon fell beneath my rage; but my active passion still continued, and would have done, perhaps, till I had murdered him, had not a violent stroke on my face, from Vine, withdrawn my vengeance from its first object, and turned itself on him. Strong, even to madness, I seized this second offender, and soon reduced him to as destitute a state as his friend; but a third assailant, more desperate than the last, struck me on the head with his truncheon so effectually, that I fell to the ground. He was pursuing his advantage, when, happily, Mr. Hindes and

and his nephew rushed in, and savec
me from farther harm.

I soon recovered my legs, and castin
round my eyes, beheld the whole roon
in confusion, divided into two parties
one wiping the blood from Roberts'
nostrils, the other condoling at the su
fering dignity of Manager Vine; whil
none regarded me but the two M
Hindes.

I called aloud for the man who struc
me; but no one would deign to poi
him out. Teeming with rage and di
gust, I ran to the dressing-room, p
on my own apparel, then went back t
Mr. Hindes, and seizing his han
cried,

"Sir, I owe you an eternal oblig
tion, which neither time or circun
stance shall ever efface; but I cann
thar

hank you now; nor can I any longer emain in your theatre, where I am ubject to the controul of Vine, and the nsolence of those beings who disgrace ll they are connected with. Farewell, hen, till better times shall throw me in our way."

Without waiting his reply, I quitted e house, and hurried to my lodgings, hich I no sooner entered, than falling n my knees, I called upon the sacred ame of God, by which I swore never ore to set my foot upon a STAGE!

"Adieu!" said I, "thou gaudy idol my youth—thou mockery of good. hou hast proved to me as a dream, herein hope awhile deludes the wanering sense, then wakens it to disapintment. Adieu! I cast thee off FORVER!"

CHAP. VIII.

I REMAINED awake the greatest part of the night, pondering on what steps I should pursue, in order to procure subsistence; and although a thousand difficulties presented themselves to my fancy, I by no means regretted the oath which I had made, and which I resolved to hold inviolate. Before my eyes were closed in sleep, I determined on quitting the town next day.

I arose not till late in the morning, when having breakfasted, I collected my little property together, which tying up in my pocket handkerchief, I settled with my landlord, and parted.

It was Tuesday, and having received

my

my salary on the preceding morning, I had, of course, no farther demand. On I went, then, with my whole worldly possessions, namely, two and fourpence in cash, two shirts, two stocks, and two pair of stockings; the last of which were so darned, as entirely to efface every bit of their original cotton, and withal, their feet pierced by such tremendous seams, that my poor soles suffered a martyrdom from them. I had but one pair of shoes, and they were toeless, a pair of white cloth-breeches, with waistcoat of the same, both well covered with chalk, and a thread-bare blue coat, but tolerably clean. All these were crowned by a hat of so convenient a texture and formation, that it was alternately a cocked and a round one, just as its master's necessities required.

Thus equipped, I again launched

forth in search of adventure, hoping to find in another sphere a repose which I had long sighed for in vain.

By the dusk of evening I reached a town situated on the banks of a delightful river, navigable many miles up the country, and which received its flood from a large wash that opened into the sea. The streets were neatly built, and the inhabitants wore a cheerful look, in which were depicted content, health, and industry. "Here," said I, "methinks I could remain for-ever."

I entered a public-house that faced the river, and demanded whether I could have a lodging there, when being answered in the affirmative, I seated myself in the parlour, and ordered refreshment.

There were several other persons sitting round a table, who appeared to be tradesmen of the town, and neighbouring farmers. Their conversation running on the history of their own concerns, gave no opportunity for me to join them. Every time the landlord came in, he entered into their chat, and seemed ambitious of diverting them, by venting all the little anecdotes he had gathered since their last meeting; but they were untinged with the mischiefs of detraction, and at the expence of no one's character.

I greatly admired the sociality that reigned among them, and could not help wishing to be fixed within their friendly circle. Finding the landlord address himself to me with much good-nature, I resolved, if possible, to make him my friend, and request his assistance in procuring me some employ-

ment.

ment. The following morning, I therefore put my scheme in execution. I gave him a brief history of my life, told him I was disgusted at the stage, and solicited his advice and friendship towards the attainment of some other source which might enable me to live.

He approved my intention, and heartily wished me success; but shewed a reluctance to recommend me; observing, that people were very cautious of engaging strangers, and advised my returning to the place where I was born. I informed him, that before it was possible for me to reach it, I must either starve or be reduced to beggary, my purse being so low, as to render my immediate application to some employment necessary.

"Well," said he, "if that be the case, there can be no harm in your trying

trying them. You had better, therefore, go about it directly."

He then directed me to the most likely places; upon which, making myself as decent as my poor wardrobe would allow, I sallied forth in quest of what I wanted.

The first house that caught my attention, was a large corn-factor's, into which I stepped; and seeing a mean-looking man, whose appearance bespoke him a Quaker, employed in counting empty sacks, addressed myself to him, and demanded to speak with his master.

"My master," answered he, still attending to his business, "is in Heaven, where he reigneth supreme: I allow no other. But suppose I had an earthly master, friend, what might be thy concern with him?"

"I am

"I am mistaken, Sir," said I, bowing—"You are the gentleman of this house?"

"This dwelling," returned he, "and all which doth inherit and pertain unto it, belongeth unto me. What wouldest thou seek, young man?"

"I am in want of employment, Sir, and seek it now of you."

"Of what handicraft or profession art thou?"

"Alas! Sir, I have been taught no trade, but would willingly be useful in any thing, and should rejoice to serve a worthy master."

"But of what use canst thou be to me, or any other man, seeing thou hast not learnt a business by which thou

canst

canst exist: I pray thee, tell me friend, what was thy last situation, and how hast thou hitherto lived?"

"My last situation was the stage, and I lived by its profession."

"Avaunt, thou son of Sin!" exclaimed he, starting back a considerable distance, in apparent horror, as if he had really beheld the prince of darkness. "Avaunt, thou unclean one, and defile not my floor with thy unhallowed feet!"

Imagining the man to be no less than mad, I hurried out of his shop with all possible expedition, leaving him to recover his affright at leisure.

Upon reflecting on the antipathy which the brethren entertain to the drama and its votaries, my surprize ceased

ceased at the alarm into which I had thrown this son of purity; but entertaining better hopes from one of my own religion, continued my walk till I came to a respectable upholsterer's, where observing a young girl at work in the warehouse, accosted her, and requested to see the master of the house. She instantly went backward, and calling "Father," was followed by a brisk and pleasant looking man about fifty years old, who bowed to me with much politeness, and demanded my business.

"I am so unhappy, Sir," said I, "as to be poor and friendless; yet, honest and industrious: Can you assist me to any kind of employment?"

"Were you bred an upholsterer?"

"No, Sir, I never learnt the business."

"What trade are you then, young man?"

"I have been taught no trade, Sir; but trust, that I might be useful in any. I can keep your books, and attend your warehouse. I have been, formerly, clerk in an office."

"You were not born in this town?"

"No, Sir, I received my birth in London."

"Bless my soul; and do you come from London to seek a place of that kind here? O dear! O dear! business is not so flourishing among us, but every master can post his own ledger. No, good youth, you would be as useless to me as an infant. I advise you, by all means, go back again to London; for, depend upon it, you will stand a poor chance of succeeding here."

"O Rousseau!" exclaimed I, turning from the shop, "how wise wert thou, in making thy Emilius a carpenter!"

I next went into a woollen-draper's, where seeing an old gentleman, whose aspect bore the authority of a master, I approached him, and said,

"I am come, Sir, to offer you my services, if you should haply need them; for I am poor, and want a master."

"And I want a servant, young man," replied he, "and will engage the first who happens to please me." My breast at this dilated with hope, and I exclaimed,

"Then, Sir, I trust you will find a worthy one in me."

" I wish it may prove so, with all my heart," said he, " for I like the activity of your manner: pray who was your last master?"

" My last master, Sir," replied I, with hesitation—" my last master is not an inhabitant of this town."

" Well, but who are your friends, and what are your connexions in this town?"

" Alas! Sir, I have neither friends or connexions. I am an entire stranger to every one around me, and know them no farther than as their being of the same species with myself; but trust that will be no impediment to my hopes of your approbation."

" You have no friends, no connexions, and yet presume to think I shall hire you as my servant! why, young

young man, you must either deem me mad, or you must be mad yourself.—No, no, you won't do—you won't do by any means."

"Unfeeling people," cried I, leaving his shop—"then must I perish, because I am a stranger!"

Fallen as were my hopes, I tried at several other places; but met the same rebuff from all. My having learnt no business, and being an unfriended stranger, acted as impassable barriers to each attempt.

Loaded with vexation, I returned to my landlord, and informed him of my useless labours. He bade me not sink under disappointment, but be of good cheer, and try once more on the following day. I did so; but found my endeavours equally unpropitious as on the

preceding, and after walking about till I began to find myself noticed in a particular manner by several of the inhabitants, who probably conjectured me to be an impostor, or perhaps a spy, I gave over the pursuit, and resigned myself to despair.

My money was all spent, and seeing no means of procuring even a trifle to pay what I owed my landlord for two meals, I explicitly confessed to him my situation, and entreated his influence in procuring me work of any kind.

" Will you make hay ?" said he.

" Most joyfully," answered I, " if any one will employ me."

" Then rest content," returned he, " for to-morrow I will get you a master."

He

He kept his promise; and that very day spoke to a farmer, who readily took me on his recommendation. The following morning I set off on foot, and at noon arrived at the farm of my new master.

On entering the kitchen, I saw an old woman taking out of a boiler some large pieces of pork and a number of coarse plumb-puddings, which she stowed into three or four wooden bowls; then covering them over very carefully with cloths, desired a lad who stood by to take them to the pudding-cart, and make all possible haste.

Admiring what I saw, and anxious to recommend myself, I voluntarily assisted the youth in conveying them, which courtesy he received in a very thankful manner. I then returned to the old lady, who, before I could speak, accosted me thus:

"Young man, I thank thee for thy kindly service. Hast thee had any dinner yet?"

"None," said I.

"None! God help thee; why thee look'st woundy hungry. Come, sit down and take a bit with me and the maids." She then went to the door, and ringing a bell, came back, attended by three buxom wenches, who instantly spreading the cloth, and placing on the grateful fare, we sat down to our meal, with the satisfaction that ever accompanies health and appetite.

Upon inquiry, I learned that my master was a widower; his chief companion a niece, who was then out with him, and would not return till the evening. I informed them of my being their fellow-servant, and begged them

them to command my services in any thing that might assist them. But, after expressing their satisfaction, they desired I would remain and rest myself in the kitchen all that day.

About six in the evening my master and his niece arrived. The last was a charming girl, apparently eighteen years of age; her manners simple and graceful. The first, who had seen me before at my friendly landlord's, nodded to me, and desired I would rise in the morning with his people, and attend them to the field.

At dusk the men, six in number, exclusive of the lad, returned from their labour, supped, and immediately retired to rest, and I with them.

There was a youth among them, whose manners and appearance so dis-

 tinguished

tinguished him from the rest, that I could not help attaching myself more particularly to his society. His features were clouded with melancholy, and every object seemed to interrupt his thoughts. In me, he no doubt saw a similarity of sentiment and fortune, which ever begets esteem. He therefore met the advances of my friendship, and, from the first meeting, we were as brothers.

One room held us all, in which were four little beds, well adapted to the season, by the scantiness of their cloathing; I, and the lad, whose name was James, occupied one.

We arose at five in the morning, when each man being furnished with his implement of husbandry, and I being honoured with a rake, proceeded cheerfully to the field of industry. On

our

our arrival there, I found a number of other persons, who were also employed by our master; but they being merely temporary servants, lived at their own houses with their wives and children, some of whom accompanied them, and shared their labour.

Seeing the rest begin work, I stripped off my coat, and submitted myself to their direction, with an elevation of spirits that seldom accompanies labour.

In about three hours we assembled to breakfast, which consisted of cold meat, bread, cheese, and excellent small beer, all which we had brought with us. Our repast ended, we resumed our work. I continued my humble task with infinite satisfaction, and comparing my present situation with the cares I had recently undergone, could not help fancying myself transported

from the dominions of Circe to the fields of Elysium, amidst health, peace, and plenty. But the sun now began to shed *intolerable day*; and from being unaccustomed to labour under his meridian influence, I could scarcely support it. The happy arrival, however, of James with our dinner, raised and invigorated me.

We shared our welcome meal under a shady part of the field; after which we rested, and then renewed our toil, which ended not till the god of day had sunk beneath the horizon, when we chatted together awhile, and then returned to our homes. Never did the temptations of creative luxury taste so sweet as did my humble supper, and never did the downy beds of princes invite more strongly to sleep, than did my lowly cot after my first day's toil.

The following days passed on nearly as the first, except their being sweetened by a little amusement. The singularity of my manners, when compared with those of my companions, proved extremely agreeable to them. They would listen to my descriptions of the world with the utmost interest; and every evening the interval between labour and rest became lengthened, for the sake of indulging in the relation of my adventures. I was happy enough to afford them another kind of entertainment, no less aceeptable to them than the former.

My melancholy friend, whom they called William, was in possession of an excellent English flute, which he had but just began to learn. One evening having played till he was tired, he laid it on the table with some impatience on which I took it up, and saying

"Hear

"Hear, William, the effect of perseverance," commenced a performance upon it that charmed their rustic taste. But let me inform you, reader, that I was, from a boy, accounted a proficient on that neglected instrument, and have frequently delighted ears accustomed to refined music.

Among the rest, Edith, our master's niece, came forth and listened to my strains. During her presence I perceived the blood flow and recede from the cheeks of my friend William. His eyes were, by turns, fixed on her and on the ground. His heart heaved with repeated sighs, and his whole frame seemed agitated under the influence of love. I laid down my flute; the young lady retired, and William was again himself.

Next morning I taxed him with his passion.

passion. His looks confessed, but his tongue would not acknowledge it.

"Alas!" said he, forcing a smile—"you must think me mad, to fall in love with one so much above me. What hopes could I entertain for a return of her regard; I who am her uncle's servant, from her who is his heiress?"

"William," replied I, "love is as little a respecter of persons as death. His laws know no distinction. His arrows fly at random, and the same shaft has been known to pierce the breast of a princess and a peasant. That you are deeply in love with our master's niece, is palpable to me, from your behaviour last night in her presence. I should deem myself ungenerous to encourage in you a hope that I was conscious might lead to disappointment; but will by no means suffer you to droop from

from imaginary obstacles. We will devise some means that may determine your fate. In the mean time be cheerful, and let your features wear a happier aspect."

The heart of William swelled with gratitude: he seized my hand, confessed his love, and then turned to his work, in order to hide from my view the emotions which my words had raised.

But our attempts were unsuccessful; for Edith was never to be found alone. She was always either in the company of her uncle or of the maids, while William and myself were so surrounded by our fellow-servants, that it was impossible to speak with her unobserved. He would not venture a letter, lest she should take offence at his presumption, and betray him to her uncle,

cle, though I in vain attempted to do away that apprehension; for she would still come and listen in the evening to our alternate music on the flute, and shew the most engaging condescension.

One evening I composed the following song, which I set to a popular air, and sung to my companions. Edith heard it also, and so much admired it, that she desired the maids (who gave me the secret) to request my repeating it each successive night.

LOVE AND LIBERTY.

Upon a bank of lilies fair,
In sweet repose was laid
A Nymph, who breath'd a heavenly air,
And heavenly charms display'd:
From forth the hills and distant wilds she came,
Immortal she, and Liberty her name.

Long had the tyrant God of Love
Her freedom sought t' insnare:

But

But idle all his arts did prove—
She scorn'd both him and Care;
And when he bent his bow, or play'd his wiles,
Laugh'd at his threats, his dimples, and his
smiles.

The vanquish'd God, asham'd to find
His boasted skill so vain,
Mounted in sad despair the wind,
And fled from her disdain.
Swift to the haunts of mortal throngs he drove,
And slavish mortals own'd the tyrant Love.

But wand'ring now, he chanc'd to stray
Along the green bank's side,
Till passing where the Fair-one lay,
He strung his bow, and cried—
" Now take, proud Nymph, my surest, keenest
" dart;
" Now feel my empire o'er thy wayward heart."

The arrow flew, the Nymph arose,
Her eyes shot vengeful fire—
" Dastard!" she cried, " 'gainst my repose
" Dar'st thou thy arts conspire?
" Lo! from my breast thy foolish shaft recoils,
" And my free heart disdains thy feeble toils."

Thus said, in dire revenge she springs
To seize her trembling foe:
In anger clips his silken wings,
And breaks his silver bow.
That fatal day this doom was fix'd by JOVE—
"PART, PART FOREVER, LIBERTY FROM
"LOVE!"

CHAP. IX.

TIME passed on in this manner till seven weeks had elapsed; when the harvest was successfully finished, our master satisfied, and the accustomed supper of HARVEST HOME was to complete the grateful season.

To join this genial feast, several friends were invited, both rich and poor, who, with our own people, formed a numerous party. The kitchen was prepared for the occasion, and enriched with all the honours of the house.

At last the happy night arrived; the company were assembled; a fiddler hired to enliven them; and I undertook to play the flute. The master, friend, and

and servant, were seated in promiscuous order; no distinction known; but he who was most cheerful, was now most honoured. In short, nothing was seen but plenty, harmony, and joy.

Come, ye votaries of ambition, who seek your glory in the smiles of princes and the pomp of courts—come, and compare thy sensations with those that glowed within the breasts of this happy society. As the false meteors of the night are to the sun's prolific beams, so are thy pleasures, when compared with theirs. Thy glory flutters on the breath of men; theirs rests on the beneficence of God.

Our feast being over, the tables were removed, to make room for the dance; in the bustle of preparing for which, I seized the hand of Edith, and pointing to William, told her that, through the medium

medium of me, he sought the happiness of dancing with her.

"And why," said she, with a tone and look that would have induced many a heart to have betrayed its friend—" and why will not *you* dance with me?"

Awakened in a moment to a conviction of her regard, yet still true to my trust, I replied,

"Alas! sweet Edith, I have not the claim that William has. He loves you to distraction, and would think the troubles of his life repaid by your condescension. Besides, I do not possess the wish to join in such delight; for my spirits are oppressed with care, occasioned by the loss of an amiable wife—lost I know not how. By turns I mourn her death, when perhaps she still exists;

or hope I yet may meet her, when, perhaps, she is in the grave."

Edith withdrew her hand from mine. "I cannot dance to-night," said she; and retired to another part of the room, while I rejoined my friend.

"I have been recommending you," said I, "as her partner; but she is indisposed, and cannot dance this evening."

"O no!" said he, "you have been wrong: there is a person more welcome to her than ever I can be, and him you should have offered."

"And who," demanded I, "is that happy person?"

"You cannot surely be ignorant of him," replied he, with a painful smile, "for it is yourself."

However

However true this might be, I deemed it proper to efface, if possible, the impression from his mind; and my intention sprung from the purest motive; for I still hoped for his success.

"Do not, my friend," rejoined I, "harbour that opinion, for it is unjust; and, to banish every apprehension of that nature, listen to me. I am married. Believe me still farther—she knows it; consequently she cannot be attached to a man whom she never can possess, and of whom you, I hope, think better, than to believe he would betray his friend."

I was now obliged to repair to my station by the fiddler, and prepare my flute, the dancers being all coupled, and only waiting for Edith, whose partner a good-natured old gentleman insisted upon being. She at first attempted

ed to excuse herself, but a look from her uncle urged her to comply. She therefore took her station, and the dance began.

William beheld the gracefulness of her motion, unmixed with jealousy, seeing nothing to fear from so contrasted a rival as the old gentleman. I could not but admire the ease of her motion; her dress, manners, and features, bespeaking the sweetest simplicity imaginable.

The dance finished, each couple returned to their seats, in order to make room for others; and the partner of Edith began pouring forth his compliments upon her merit, bewailing at the same time his age and incapacity.

"But, however, my sweet little wench," said he, casting round his eyes,

and fixing them at last on William, "for thy kindness, thou shalt not be, any longer troubled with an old fellow, especially as I see a lad here, who I think will suit thee a deal better. So come, I'll join thy hands; and the devil take them who shall attempt to part ye."

It is impossible to paint the joy that sparkled in the eyes of William, when first he felt the touch of Edith. He bowed to her with the most modest respect, and spoke his raptures in a kiss, which he imprinted on her hand; while she returned it with a smile. The dance was again renewed, and William and his Edith moved gaily in the throng.

It had not ended, before a violent knocking at the outer gate alarmed us all. Immediately a man was dispatched to answer it. He instantly returned with

with a strange gentleman in black, who exclaimed in accents of joy,

"Where is my boy! Where art thou, my son!" and fell upon the neck of William.

"O, my dear father!" responded the latter, gazing on him with delight.

The mirth of the company was suspended in admiration at the scene before them. But judge my surprize, reader, when, on examining the stranger's features, I recognized those of Mr. Freeman, my prison-friend! The first sensations of his full heart being past, he cried,

"My good boy, I am glad to see thee—very, very glad, because I bring thee joy. Thou hast hitherto been poor and honest, and need not be

 ashamed

ashamed at what hath past. God preserve thy heart the same! Thou art, now as good a gentleman as any in this happy society, if five hundred a-year can make thee so."

"But how," cried William—"how comes this wonderous fortune?"

"Thy uncle, my boy, is dead," replied he, "and to atone for his living cruelty, has been just in death. He has made a settlement on me, and left thee his heir."

"Heavens!" exclaimed William, then turning to his partner, continued in a transport, "now Edith, sweet Edith, can you love me?" Edith answered not, but blushing, hid her face.

Mr. Freeman being seated, I arose, and standing before him, said,

"May

"May an old and humble friend hope to live in your remembrance?"

He instantly knew me, and, grasping my hand, expressed as much satisfaction as if I had been another son.

"Yes, my good youth," said he, "I never shall forget thee. Thou wert the companion of my miseries, and many a sad day hath been banished in thy presence. Thou shalt share our fortune."

Our master immediately prepared refreshment for his new guest, whom he attended with the utmost respect.

The dances ceased by the concurrence of all parties, and the pleasures of the evening became more tranquil: the old amusing themselves with the stories of their youth, and the young anticipating new delights.

 William,

William, grown bold by his fortune, could not restrain the transports it inspired, nor rest till his glory was complete. He openly, before all present, avowed his passion, and sought the sanction both of his master and his parent, who both willingly assented; while the gentle Edith smiled her sweet consent. The whole company wished them joy, and parted in the happiest friendship.

The love of my friend could not brook procrastination; for the next day he dispatched a messenger for a marriage-license, and on the following Sunday was blessed in the possession of his Edith.

The house was now a scene of general joy; or, if an exception could be found, it was with me; for though I rejoiced in the happiness of those around me,

me, my own cares were still present at my heart. I pined under the doubts of Caroline's fate, and resolved not to think of peace till I had ascertained it. I therefore determined on proceeding to that place where she was lost, and accordingly imparted my intention to my friends. In vain did William and his father entreat my accompanying them to their estate, and share their fortune; when, finding they could not prevail, they offered me a fifty pound bank-note, to defray my journey. But I would accept no more than five guineas, and William's flute for a remembrance. With these, and my promises of joining them as soon as the object of my journey was fulfilled, they suffered me, with many expressions of regret, to depart.

My treasure, with the five guineas

and the wages due to me, amounted to seven pounds odd. With this, having taken leave of all, I once more set forward in search of Caroline.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

THE distance of the town where the cause of all my sorrow took place, was a hundred and seventy miles, which, for the sake of economy, I resolved to walk.

The first day I travelled eight and twenty miles, and in the evening stopped at a small country ale-house, where I supped and slept. The following morning I again set forward, first furnishing myself with victuals for the day. I continued my journey at a very brisk pace till noon, when the heat began to overpower me; and looking about for a resting-place, I espied an opening into a field, which immediately taking advantage of, I sheltered myself under the

shade of a chesnut-tree, and spreading out my humble fare upon the grass, commenced my meal with as much zest as if it had been prepared by a professed London cook.

The situation I had chosen was delightful. It commanded a view of some distant hills to the right, whose summits seemed to reach the heavens; and on my left was a valley, whence I saw the smoke ascending from a lowly village. When I had finished my repast, I gathered up the remnants, and tying them up in my handkerchief, with the rest of my little treasure, submitted to the enjoyment of the scene around me; but ere I had contemplated long, fell into an involuntary slumber. My mind, however, was still employed on the same object who possessed it when awake.

I fancied myself sailing on a calm sea, when suddenly a storm arose, that threatened the destruction of our vessel. Amid the horror of expected death, I cast my eyes toward Heaven, whence I saw Caroline descending, arrayed in white, appearing as an angel, and alighted on our ship.

" My William," said she, smiling, " thy troubles now are over." I immediately attempted to clasp her in my arms; but before I could effect it, a mountainous wave burst over our heads, and immersed us in the deep. Caroline then held me by the hand, and the sea became calm at her command; nor did it affect my respiration. We descended gradually down, till I found myself in a new world—such as the poets describe Elysium to be. Enraptured with the scene around me, I caught Caroline in

my arms, and in the excess of transport awoke.

My mind was so absorbed in the delirium, that for a time I could not remember where I was, till, rousing myself, I regained my senses, and found that I had lost my bundle. Apprehensive of worse consequences, I thrust my hand into my pocket, and missed my purse, with every shilling it contained. In vain I rose, and looked around the field. I looked and looked again; but all was gone.

"Fool, fool!" cried I, in madness, "fortune may smile on thee in vain; still will thy own preposterous folly mar each good she brings."

Conscious of having been robbed during my repose, there were but two

alter-

alternatives, namely, either of going back to my friends for a fresh supply, or of begging my way forward. I weighed them some time in my mind, and at length determined on the latter. The shame of returning with a ridiculous story, with the delay it would occasion, prevented my choosing the former. Accordingly, I proceeded onward, and soon arrived at the village on my left. At its extremity I came to a farm-house, which entering, and finding the mistress and two maids, I related my story to them. They pitied, and relieved me. The mistress ordering bread, cheese and ale, presented them to me with a shilling, while the servants would insist on my acceptance of sixpence from each of them, which I took with much reluctance, and departed.

I had inquired the distance to the next town, and learning it to be no

more

more than five miles, resolved on proceeding thither, and abiding there that night.

About half past eight I reached it, and entering the first public-house that presented itself, demanded if I could not sleep there; when being answered yes, I indulged myself with a pint of ale, and went to bed.

For a time I lay ruminating on my condition, and concerting how I should proceed. The money in my possession would not keep me another day; nor had I any prospect of procuring more. I at last came to the determination, rather than trouble my friends by sending back to them, of stating my circumstances to the publican, and requesting his aid in procuring me some employment, which would, in a short time, furnish me with a sufficient sum to

to pursue my journey. Accordingly, next morning after breakfast I opened my mind to him.

If ever misanthropy personified itself on earth, it surely breathed within this man, whose whole appearance, word and look, seemed at war with all mankind.

His answer to my inquiry was— "Work! yes; there's work enough fo[r] you if you are not lazy." Telling hi[m] that I might possibly sleep again at hi[s] house that night, I sallied forth to see[k] a temporary means of existence, an[d] soon offered myself to a number of per[-] sons, but met with the same receptio[n] as on the former occasion; every on[e] answering me with the same languag[e] as the quaker, the upholsterer, and th[e] woollen-draper. I told my tale to man[y] of them. They observed that it wa[s] har[d]

hard, but offered me no relief, and the evening commenced without a prospect of my procuring a shelter. My money was now reduced to threepence, which, unable to resist the calls of Nature, I spent at another public-house, in two-penny worth of bread and cheese, and half a pint of beer.

I told this landlord my story also, nd emboldened by distress, requested ermission to rest in any part of his ouse for the night. He shook his ead, and answered, that he was sorry r me, but his incumbrances were too reat for admitting him to serve a ranger. I urged him no farther, but ushed into the street, and proceeded know not whither, till a wooden orch, with benches on each side, attracted my notice.

"Here," said I, "will I rest this night;"

night;" and accordingly laying myself at full length, submitted to necessity. My repose was uninterupted till the morning, when the early children of labour awoke me as they passed. Friendless, moneyless, and hungry, I again issued forth in search of work; but alas! it seemed as though some mark was stamped upon my front to set mankind against me. I wandered through the streets all day, rejected and unrelieved, till dark, when faint from fatigue and hunger, I came to the gate of an inn, and reclining against one of the posts, waited in hope for the arrival of some generous stranger who might afford me assistance.

In a short time a gentleman on horseback, followed by his groom, approached, and alighted at the entrance. Regardless of any thing but my wants, I

moved

moved towards him, seized his arm, and in agitated accents begged relief.

" Impudent ruffian !" said he, and gave me a violent blow with his cane.

Depressed as I was by poverty, my spirit could not brook the insult. I clenched my hand and returned his blows, when a violent scuffle ensued, till the servant, seeing his master attacked, and fearful of leaving the horses, called aloud for help. On which there instantly came forth both ostlers and waiters, who beholding the scene, fell upon me without mercy, till I dropped to the ground, where they still continued their fury, crying out,

" We'll teach such rascals as you to molest a gentleman !" till the unfeeling man himself, fearful perhaps of my life, desired

desired them to desist; when they left me, covered with wounds, to crawl away at my leisure.

Their blows having fallen at random, and been in some measure baffled by their numbers, did me no alarming injury; so that I was able to walk at a slow pace, and in the hope of exciting some pity by my misfortunes, proceeded to the publican with whom I lodged on the first night. I told the event to him, and prayed for some little refreshment, with permission to sleep in any part of his premises for that one night, in order to screen my bruises from the nocturnal air.

He immediately broke into a passion, swearing all was false; for that no gentleman would have so treated me, without a just provocation, and concluded by insisting on my instantly quitting his

his house, which should not be disgraced by any such impostor.

I obeyed his harsh commands, and once more sought my humble porch, where, resolving to leave the inhospitable town next morning, I shrunk into a corner, and resigned myself to sleep.

I was awakened at an early hour by a team with bells passing me; and finding it broad day-light, attempted to rise, but was so extremely feeble, that I could not effect it till after repeated efforts. At last, however, I set forward, and happily meeting a milk-maid with full pails, begged a draught of her, with which she kindly obliged me. This greatly refreshed me, and I pursued my journey with a lighter heart, till I soon found myself upon the country-road.

I walked but at a slow pace till noon, meeting on my way but three persons, of whom I asked relief, and succeeded with one, a poor fellow, who gave me two-pence, which was, however, of no immediate use, there being no house at hand wherein I could procure refreshment.

On inquiring of a farmer's boy, he informed me I had left a village a mile on my right; and that, about three miles farther there was another. Hoping that my wearied limbs would bear me to the last, I continued onward for infinitely more than that distance, when finding the boy had made a jest of me, and overcome with heat, fatigue and hunger, I was compelled to stop.

Seeing a gate which opened into a field where a large hay-stack stood, I with much difficulty climbed over it, and

and reached the inviting spot: when choosing the shaded side, in order to screen me from the sun, I laid myself at length upon the ground, and gave full scope to my sorrows. Soon the torments of hunger and reflection gave way to my exhausted spirits, and I sunk to sleep.

Nature herself seemed bent on sporting with my misfortunes; for she suffered me to rest till midnight, and then awakened me to all her horrors, exposed to one of the most tremendous storms I ever witnessed. The thunder rolled with unremitted terrors over my head; the lightning flashed from every part of Heaven, and seemed to threaten all around with destruction; while torrents of rain overwhelmed me in their flood. In the midst of this contention of the elements, a horse passed by me in wild affright; but fate overtook him

in his flight: I saw a vivid dart strike him, and he fell lifeless on the ground. Impressed with awe at the scene, I strove to rise upon my knees, and implore the mercy of Heaven. But my limbs denied their office. So far from being able to lift myself from the ground, I had scarcely sufficient power to move; every part being numbed almost to death. In vain I attempted to crawl from the stack, as conscious of my danger, from its being a conductor to the electric fluid, and which, by its attraction, might end me in an instant. For wretched as my condition was, I thought on Caroline, and wished to live. But all exertions were ineffectual. My weakness, arising from want of nourishment, deprived me of all power, and I remained fixed to the spot, expecting each moment to share the same fate as the animal before me.

At length the storm had spent its fury, and Nature appeared to atone, by bringing in the morn with all the splendour of autumnal glory. The clouds dispersed before the sun; the elements were hushed, and every object smiled but me; for I remained a prey to all the pangs of mortal dissolution. Death seemed to have overspread my body, and fast advancing to my vitals. I gave over every hope of life, and awaited my approaching fate, groaning at times, and calling on the name of Caroline.

In the midst of this agony, I was surprized by a voice, that uttered, from the very soul of charity,

"Poor, poor youth! what ails thee?" and raising my eyes, observed a venerable old man in humble apparel.

"Leave

"Leave me," said I, "to die; I shall soon be past thy help."

"Alas, alas!" returned he, bending to me, and taking my hand, "I must not see thee perish, perhaps from want of Christian charity: come, poor lad, let me lead thee to my cottage, which is hard by, and my dame shall nurse thee into health. But, lack-a-day! how cold is thy poor flesh! Canst thou not walk?"

With his assistance, and a violent struggle of my own, I raised myself up, and reclined against the hay-stack; another effort brought me on my legs. But the first step I attempted to make, I dropped again to the ground, while the good old man, still holding me, in part broke the fall.

"Well, well," said he, "since thou canst not walk, I'll e'en carry thee."

"O no," returned I; "thy age cannot support me."

"I warrant thee," rejoined he; "the cause will make me strong." He accordingly bent down to me once more, and placing my arms over his shoulders, rose, and carried me to his little home, which was situated about three hundred yards from the field, a good distance from the road, and in a small inclosure, agreeably interspersed with garden and orchard.

"God bless thee, husband!" exclaimed his dame, the moment she saw us—"who hast thee got there?"

"A poor lad," answered he, "whom I found perishing in the field."

"Poor

"Poor boy," said she, "how pale and sad thee look'st! how long hast thou been in the field?"

"All night, good mother," replied I.

"Heaven pity thee!" cried she—"all in that frightful storm! come husband, let us put him in our bed, and comfort him." They did so; and assisting me to undress, wrapped me up in a blanket. Soon after, the good old woman brought me a bason of warm milk porridge, from which I found immediate benefit. Her husband then, shaking my hand, bid me be of good heart, and went to pursue his work.

I soon felt the effects of the flannel on my limbs, which now began to resume their use, though with so much pain as to prevent my sleeping, and I was still awake when the cottager returned

turned from his labour. In his hand he brought a small basket, from which he took out two bottles, a trussed fowl, and a piece of raw beef.

"Here, wife," said he, "make the best of these good things for the poor youth: I told my master of the affair, and he gave me these two bottles of wine to cheer him, this chicken for his dinner, and this beef to make him some broth."

"God bless him!" exclaimed the old lady, "he is always doing good."

"And who, my friend," said I, "is your master: tell me, that I too may bless him." He then informed me that his name was Lambert; that he lived but a quarter of a mile off, and was admired and beloved by all around him, for his affability and con-

condescension to the poor, whom he befriended on every occasion. "I," concluded the old man, "am employed in managing his orchard, and enjoy as happy a life under him as a servant can wish to lead."

My kind nurse instantly prepared my dinner, which served greatly to recruit me, for my weakness chiefly proceeded from the want of food. However, I was still unable to rise, and when night came, this charitable pair insisted on my remaining in their bed, while they made a temporary one for themselves.

I remained a week confined under this humble and hospitable roof, without being able to walk abroad; during which time its kind inhabitants treated me with the tenderness of parents, while Mr. Lambert continued his libe-

 rality,

rality, ordering a doctor to attend, and supplying me with every necessary.

I anxiously prayed for the moment when I might, in person, express my gratitude to this gentleman, who, though unacquainted with my deserts, so amply extended his beneficence. At last it arrived, and my friendly cottager undertook the office of leading me to his house.

Previous to setting forth, I took some pains to render my appearance as decent as possible, and in the act of putting on my neckcloth, looked into a mirror. I cannot describe my surprize on viewing my features. They really shocked me. My complexion wore a death-like paleness; my bones seemed bursting through my skin, while my eyes were sunk deep into my head, expressive both of corporeal and mental infirmity.

CHAP. XI.

ABOUT three in the afternoon I set forward with my kind conductor, the man to whom I owed my life.

Soon the house appeared. It was situated on the declivity of a hill, whose summit commanded a prospect of the sea, and was adorned with a grove of pines, while the divided land from thence to its base, gave it the appearance of one beautiful garden. The house had a charming air of simplicity, and was surrounded by gardens of its own, laid out in romantic order, with such effect as to impress the mind with a pleasing melancholy.

Arriving at the gate, my friend open-

ed it, and led me round by a back way to the kitchen, where I thought proper to wait till he should go before with my respects, and request permission for me to acknowledge my sense of obligation. He immediately returned, and conducting me to the parlour-door, which was open, left me.

My ears were delighted by the tones of a chamber-organ, played upon with exquisite taste. I stopped some time, as unwilling to disturb the harmony, till fearful of being expected, I entered the room, and, casting my eyes round, perceived the performer to be a lady in mourning, whose back was towards me. On one side of her stood a servant, holding in her arms a child, who seemed listening in raptures to the music. Still fearful to interrupt, I stood fixed to my station, in silent delight at what I heard and saw. At length the lady ceased,

ceased, and, taking the child in her arms, imprinted on its infant cheeks, a kiss that spoke nothing less than maternal love.

Finding she did not observe me, I approached, and uttering, " Madam," she turned her face to me——Good God, it was Caroline !"

I started back in surprize mixed with joy, and remained in one position for a considerable time, with my eyes fixed upon her, without being able to move, or utter a single sentence ; while she, pressing the child to her bosom, discovered nothing but symptoms of alarm, and said, in a trembling accent,

" Good man, what is the matter ?"

" Do you not know me, Caroline ?" said I.

With an instinctive motion, she gave the child to its nurse, shrieked aloud, and fell senseless into my arms.

The servant screamed at the situation of her mistress; and before I could explain a word, Mr. Sterling rushed into the room, and flew to the assistance of his daughter.

His anxiety for her, prevented his observance of me; and the moment she revived, he asked in the tenderest manner the cause of her alarm. But the heart of Caroline was too big for utterance. She smiled in his face, pointed at me, and burst into a flood of tears.

"Good God!" cried Mr. Sterling, observing me with surprize, "what does this mean? Speak, Caroline."

"Do you not know my Templeton?" said she.

"Your

"Your Templeton!" responded he, surveying my features with astonishment—"What, Templeton, my child!"

"The same," replied I, "whom once you deigned to call your friend: the same in heart, though sickness and misfortunes have so changed his features."

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed he, flying to embrace me, "canst thou be so altered! Welcome, welcome! You meet us now in joy; indeed you bring it with you. Our fortune is entirely changed, and every blessing of life is in our possession, now that you have joined us. And here," continued he, taking the child from its nurse—"here, let me present you with a new friend, whom yet you have not thought of—This girl is yours."

It was the first time I ever felt the

emotions of a parent; and parents alone can conceive them, when I pressed the child in my embrace, and heard her lisp the name of "father."

The tumult of our meeting had brought every servant of the family around us, amongst whom was my cottage friend, who no sooner learned the happiness arising from his humanity, than he was unable to restrain his joy. He by turns kissed the hand of Caroline, grasped mine and Mr. Sterling's, and hugged the child.

"There is another person," said I, interrupting his ecstacies, "wanting to complete this scene: where is Mr. Lambert?"

"I know of no other," answered he, pointing to Mr. Sterling, "than my worthy master."

"That mystery shall soon be cleared up to you, my son," said Mr. Sterling—then turning to the servants, bade them make themselves as happy as they possibly could, and let nothing be wanting to that end. My old friend followed them, spite of our wishes to detain him with us.

"No," said he, "I cannot rest till my good dame has heard the story."

Mr. Sterling, Caroline, our child, and myself, being now left together, remained some time gazing alternately at each other in expressive silence. At length Mr. Sterling, addressing himself to me, said,

"You must, no doubt, be anxious to know the circumstances of our fortune. Yours will be no less interesting to us; but, in order that Caroline may prepare

prepare herself, I will first relate mine. We will previously, however, take some refreshment. He then ordered in coffee, and began as follows:

"I must first explain my motives for writing you that letter, previous to my quitting the theatre at which you were engaged. Assured, in my own mind, of Caroline's frailty, I could not believe that a nature such as yours would link itself in marriage to her errors; for I had learned of a friend who saw you both perform, that you lived together; but he could inform me no further. Anxious, however, to know the truth, I wrote to Mr. Case, with whom I had formerly played, and who was then in your company, requesting he would explain to me the nature of your connexion. His answer was, that you passed as a new-married couple; but he, with many others, had reason to

reject

reject the belief; which reasons, however, he did not state. This, notwithstanding, served almost to confirm the doubts which had previously possessed me.

"When I heard of your engagement in the company to which I belonged, I instantly resolved to quit it; and the very day before your arrival, resigned, with the Manager's consent, and left the town on the next; first leaving that harsh letter with my landlord, charging him to give it to you so soon as he should learn your address.

"I will not tire you by a relation of events that could afford but little interest, and are in common with our profession.

"Eight weeks had elapsed, when one evening sitting in a public-house,

rumi-

ruminating upon the fluctuating state of an actor's life, and suggesting some means of renouncing it for one more congenial to my wishes, I was roused by a person at the other side of the room, who, looking earnestly in a news-paper, repeated to his companion, "Sterling, the name is Sterling; observe how it is spelt.

"Feeling, of course, some interest upon the occasion, I arose, and begged permission to look at the part; on which he, with much good-nature, pointed it out to me.

"Guess my surprize, my friend, on seeing an advertisement describing my name, family, and former residence, and stating, that by applying to an attorney at Norwich, I should hear of something greatly to my advantage.

" This was no subject for delay: I took stage the following morning, and in the evening of the same day reached the attorney's house, where I learned, that an aunt, of my mother's side, had died, and bequeathed me the whole of her possessions, under condition of my taking the sirname of Lambert, which was that of her family. My person was identified, my title proved, and in a week I was in possession and master of this estate, with landed property to the amount of twelve hundred a-year.

" The only object now wanting to complete my happiness, was a virtuous daughter. But my false conception deemed it hopeless. However, I resolved to seek and settle upon my Caroline an independence that should keep her above want. Accordingly I wrote to the proprietor in whose company I had left you both. He informed me

that

that Caroline was drowned, and you, Templeton, in a fit of despair, had put a period to your existence.

"My feelings upon this intelligence may better be imagined than described. But to what bitterness of sorrow were they raised, on learning from Mr. Wilmot, some time after, that you had been united by the chaste laws of matrimony, at his house, and that Caroline had never erred.

"I then lost all relish for my situation, and found, that to a mind not at ease fortune proved no blessing. I flew from society, and sought only to alleviate the poignancy of reflection by a few choice books. The sea being but a short walk from my house, I would, with a volume in my hand, walk upon its shore for hours together, and a storm never failed to attract me on those visits.

"One morning I was awakened by the loud tempest pealing over my head. It was scarcely day-light; yet I arose, and, according to my custom, repaired to the sea-shore, from whence I soon espied a sloop in the most imminent danger, attempting, in vain, to make the land. At times the waves hid her from my view, and again she rose above them, discovering her distress, till at last a huge sea burst upon her, and she was seen no more.

"In a moment after, the shrieks of human misery reached my ears, when, looking earnestly upon the water, I beheld a female with one arm encircling an infant, while the other clung round a plank that served to buoy her up. One moment she was ovewhelmed in the surge, the next, emerging, and crying for assistance. Careless of all danger I plunged in to save her, and, being

ing an expert swimmer, soon reached, and, with much struggling, brought her to the sands, she still grasping her infant. Redeemed from danger, she cast a look upon my face, exclaimed, " Father!" and fainted.—Templeton, it was your Caroline!"

The sensations of Mr. Lambert here overpowered his utterance. Caroline and I wept over each other, kissed our child, and bathed our father's hand with tears, while he, with a kind of agonizing joy, gave us his blessing. An interval of silence composed him, and he proceeded thus:

" My daughter and her child lay senseless at my feet! Full of unutterable fears, I raised the first in my arms.

" O; Caroline! exclaimed I, live for your child!

"The last accent seemingly called her back to life, and seizing the object of her concern, she rent the air with complaints. I snatched it from her embrace, and using every possible exertion towards its recovery, I in a short time happily proved successful; she became re-animated, when her innocent looks seemed to thank my care.

"I had been so busy in the fate of these dear objects, that no others could draw my attention till their safety was ensured, when, casting my eyes round, I observed two sailors who had escaped the wreck, one supporting the other, and leading him towards us. The ablest told me, in broken English, they were brothers; that he, the youngest, being the best swimmer, soon made the shore, but seeing the elder nearly exhausted, went back to his assistance, and, at nearly the expence of his own life,

life, brought him safely out. There was one more hand, who made up their little crew, and he was lost."

"We all proceeded to my house, where, with proper care, the poor sufferers were soon in pefect health. The two sailors remained with me a fortnight, when furnishing them with a sum sufficient for conveying them home, and making up their loss, they departed for their native country.

"Caroline, though escaped from death, could yet feel no enjoyment. The uncertainty of your fate entirely engrossed her mind, and debarred every joy. I forbore speaking of your supposed misfortune; for finding the story of my daughter erroneous, I hoped that your's might also prove so.

"We have advertised you; been to

London

London in search of you, and employed persons to traverse the country for that purpose, and in which they are occupied to this very hour. We heard of your appearance on the boards of Drury-Lane through the medium of a Mr. Price, with whom we cleared up your arrears, as also with a tailor. Mr. Price shewed us a letter which you left previous to your quitting London, and as it plainly evinced distress, our sorrow was consequently much augmented.

"Caroline now fluctuated between hope and fear; but the latter had the most powerful influence. She would gaze on her little Emma for hours, and cry, "Sweet babe, where is thy poor father! never, never wilt thou see him, my child!" then burst into tears and kiss her, till she seemed to lose her sorrow in her love. At my request she

she would often seek amusement on the organ, which delighted her infant, and diverted my heavy moments.

"Thus passed our time, amid the dread of losing and the hope of finding you; but the event of this day is, I trust, a period to our cares."

Mr. Lambert ceased, and a short silence again ensued, which Caroline interrupted by observing, that as the evening was so far spent, she would defer her story till after supper, which, she smiling said, would completely wind up our novel.

The time soon passed away, our meal was finished, and Caroline thus began:

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

CHAP. XII.

" HAVING passed the preceding part of that fatal day, the cause of all our sorrows, in reading, about four in the afternoon I walked to the beach, for the sake of enjoying more freely the beauty of the weather. Numbers were invited by the same attraction, and were passing to and fro; but I, preferring solitude, moved to a secluded part, where I remained, gazing with admiration at the vast ocean, and the pleasing diversity of the landscape.

" Having remained there some time, I perceived a woman approaching. In one hand she held a basket, and with the other led a fine boy about five years old. On coming up to me, she curt-

sied, and with much good-nature spoke of the serenity of the evening. I kissed the child, and asked him a few questions, but he was dumb from bashfulness. His mother, therefore, answered for him, and we presently fell into conversation.

"She told me that her husband was a fisherman, whom she shortly expected with his boat, in which she meant to take a sail, having for that purpose brought tea tackle and provisions in the basket she carried. She concluded by saying, that if I would venture with them, her own sister should not be more welcome. I remained in hesitation till the boat came, when her husband called her on board. She again invited me to go, and he also joined in persuasion with equal good-nature, telling me there was no danger, and modestly hinting at his own skill and experience.

perience. There appeared such unaffected kindness in their manners, that I at last yielded to it: the boat put off, and, for the first time, I found myself upon the sea.

" We moved at a very gentle rate till the spot whence we sailed was lost to our sight. Still all was calm and happy. We prepared our tea, and drank it with peculiar pleasure: I in particular, for the scene was new to me, and unconscious of danger, I gave my mind up to its enjoyment.

" Still we glided smoothly along, till the darkening sky shewed the propriety of our return; and on my first intimation, the fisherman turned about to obey my wishes.

" All on a sudden, a sharp gale sprung up, and directly opposite to our course, which alarmed me exceedingly.

ingly. They endeavoured to hush my fears, by assuring me that all the injury it could do, was that of prolonging our time; which, to my regret, I saw: for he now went an entirely new way to work; turning first to the right, and then to the left, which he called tacking. On each of these tacks, the boat did so lean on one side, that I expected each moment to be engulphed in the waves. To the terrors of my apprehension was added the misery of sea sickness. O heavens! how did I repent my rashness, in venturing from the shore. But, alas! I trembled at a shadow, when a demon was at hand.

"My fears augmented as the night increased. My companions, however, felt no uneasiness but on my account, till our boat was intercepted by a vessel with two masts, and hailed by a voice we could not understand.

"The

" The fisherman no sooner found her making towards us, than he exclaimed, " Good God !" with marks of evident concern, which his wife demanded the cause of. But, before he could answer her, a gun was fired from the ship, the shot of which pierced the front of our boat. The wife screamed; her husband let down his sails, and in a moment the ship was upon us.

" What are these ?" cried I.

" Dutchmen," answered the fisherman, " and we are prisoners to a Dutch privateer !"

" Instantly, two or three barbarians jumped into our boat, and without the least respect to our situation, rudely lifted us upon the deck of their own vessel, where I saw ten or twelve men, one of whom came towards us, and with a savage

look, beckoned us to follow him. We obeyed, when he led us into his cabin, and, assisted by two others of his crew, rifled our pockets of all they contained.

"Amidst the horror of my situation, O Templeton! I began to feel the pains of child-birth, which were brought on by the fright, and increased in a short time to such a degree, that I threw my arms round the neck of the fisherman's wife, and with grief almost unutterable, explained my sad condition. This companion of my misfortune forgot all sense of her own danger in mine: she wept aloud, and endeavoured to make the Dutchmen sensible of my condition. But for a long time, either their cruelty or stupidity, prevented their attention, till my agonies became so great, that, unable to support myself, I fell upon the floor.

" My friend now discovered more violence in her manner. She pointed at me, then at her child, and attempted to force them out of the cabin; as she did her son and husband likewise.

" The sailors muttered to themselves, and darted furious looks at me, while one of them seized, and was proceeding to drag me from the spot. Imagining no less than that he meant to throw me into the sea, I rent the air with shrieks. My companion's were as loud as mine: she threw herself upon her knees; her little boy followed her example, and her husband clasped his hands, each imploring the mercy of our enemies, till at length, the Captain commanded the ruffian to quit his hold of me, when immediately they all went out, followed by the fisherman and his son.

" Now

"Now left to ourselves, my friend fastened the door, prepared me a bed upon the ground, and in half an hour my Emma saw the world!

"It is impossible to relate the emotions that possessed me amid so many troubles. But my anxiety for my infant called forth all my fortitude, and while I pressed her to my breast, I hoped that the ALMIGHTY would one day grant me the blessing of presenting her to you.

"Some time after, the Captain returned to his cabin, and looking at me with much earnestness, drew a sliding closet, whence taking a bottle of liquor, some biscuit, and cold meat, he placed them on a table, giving us to understand they were at our service. He then, without more ceremony, laid himself at length upon a large chest, and fell asleep.

"My

" My kind nurse having procured a little warm water, prepared me some refreshment. Soon after the little boy came in, telling us that his father had sent him to remain in the cabin. On which his mother making him a bed of a piece of canvas, laid him upon it, and he soon followed the Captain's example; while she remained with me all night, condoling and sympathizing in her own and my misfortune.

" I felt the vessel's motion all night, and my poor brains were nearly distracted by the pain arising from that, and reflecting on the alarm into which you would be thrown on losing me.

" We continued sailing all the following day and night, and on the second morning from our disaster, were surprized by an unusual noise, proceeding from a number of strange

voices ; but all in a language unknown to us. Amidst our wonder, the husband of my friend came and explained, that we were in one of the dykes of Rotterdam, and should soon be put on shore.

" He had scarcely finished, before several of the crew came in, and made signs for us to go. But perceiving my extreme weakness, two of them dragged me up, and forced me to ascend the deck, from whence I perceived that we were in a narrow river, with streets on each side, and a concourse of people passing and re-passing.

" A broad plank was fixed from our ship to the land, over which they led me, and carelessly resting me against a house, would have left me to drop, had not the fisherman sprung to my assistance, followed by his wife, with

our child in her arms, and her own by her side.

"Good God!" said I, "what will become of us? tell me what these cruel people mean to do."

"Nothing more, dear lady," answered my countryman; "they have got all they want, and now left us to shift for ourselves. We must either beg or starve. But God knows, I would do any thing to lessen your sufferings."

"I will knock at this door," said his wife, fulfilling her promise, "and demand their charity."

"It was instantly opened by a woman, to whom we attempted to make ourselves understood; but whether or not

we did, I cannot tell; for she frowned, and shut the door against us.

" My fellow-sufferers now led me gently on, and tried at several other houses; but met with as little pity as at the first.

" O, my dear Templeton! conceive our situation. I think I now see the sorrowful look of the poor fisherman, supporting my trembling frame, and endeavouring to console me. On the other hand, his wife bedewing my infant with her tears, while her own child clung by turns to each of us, venting the afflictions of his little heart aloud.

" They spoke to every person who passed them, in hopes of finding one that might understand our language, and advise us where to proceed. But

their hopes were vain. We continued moving on, till my strength was quite exhausted, and I could sustain myself no longer; resting, therefore, upon the threshold of a door, I took my child and fed her at my breast.

"My female friend, emboldened by our distress, once more sought relief from this inhospitable town, by knocking at the house under which we rested. Immediately a girl appeared, who, ignorant of our wants, left the door open, and ran back into the house; but presently returned with a lady, whose appearance differed from all I had yet seen in the place. Her mien was graceful, and her features affable.

"My friends addressed her in their usual manner; but she understood them not; and fixing her eyes on me, demanded in the French tongue, the na-

ture

ture of our distress. A momentary joy vibrated on my heart, and I briefly informed her in that language of our disaster. Without hearing me to an end, she burst into tears, assisted to raise me from the stone, and led me, followed by my friends, into her parlour, where she kissed our children, and sympathized in our misfortunes. Nor did she neglect the means of alleviating them, but like Benevolence herself, prepared a welcome refreshment.

"In a short time a gentleman came in, whom presently I found to be her husband. He too, as well as herself, was a native of France. She no sooner explained our situation, than he welcomed us to his house, and expressed the highest pleasure at his lady's conduct.

"The moment I had taken the nourishment that had been presented me,

the generous lady and my countrywoman led me up to bed, where they left me with my child to repose.

"I slept several hours, and, on waking, found Madame Montel, that was the name of my benefactress, sitting at my bed-side. Perceiving me move, she tenderly inquired after my health.

"I am extremely weak, Madam," said I, "but it is impossible to feel misfortunes in your presence."

"Compose yourself," returned she, "and all will yet be well: my husband will use his interest to send back your companions the first opportunity, when they can relate your situation to your friends, and on your recovery, he will also find means to procure you a safe conveyance. Let not this event, therefore, prey upon your peace, since you

have

have nothing to fear, and are with people who respect no distinction among mankind, but regard alike, of every country, the children of misfortune."

"Near two months had passed away, and notwithstanding the care of all around me, I still remained in such a state as to be confined to my bed, when one evening, my countrywoman came weeping into the room, and for a time unable to speak.

"What is the matter, my dear friend?" said I.

"I am going to leave you," answered she.

"It is a happy circumstance," returned I: "your own friends will rejoice at your return, and you will do away the apprehensions of mine."

"O, but to leave you," cried she, "in affliction and illness, among strangers too—I cannot bear the thought!"

"Strangers!" said I—"alas! can you call them strangers? Say, did you ever witness more virtues in your own country, than you have found in these amiable foreigners?"

"No, never, never," answered she; "and the GOD of all goodness shower down his blessings on their heads!"

"At that moment Monsieur Montel and his lady entered the room. The first told me, that an officer, a particular friend of his, would early in the morning set sail for England with a cartel, and, at his request, had consented to transport my friends thither.

"You will not, Madam," said he, smiling

smiling—" you will not fear being left alone with an enemy?"

" I could wish, Sir," returned I, " that Heaven would always bless me with such, and grant me the power of proving how I *hate* them." Madame Montel then observing, that as my companions would so soon leave me, I had best take advantage of the time, and think of all I had to say, which I might send by them; she then with her husband withdrew.

" Weak as I was, I sat up in my bed, and filled a sheet of paper to you, my Templeton; in which, after describing every incident, I solicited your forgiveness for the rashness of my conduct. I then gave it to my friend, with directions how to convey it, judging you must have left that town from whence I sailed.

" This

"This faithful companion insisted on sitting up with me all night; nor did I object to her wishes, as it was joy to dwell upon the coming event that would alleviate the cares of my husband.

"We remained in conversation till day-light, when her little boy came in, bidding her prepare for departure, and telling me that his father waited at the door, to take his leave of me. I immediately desired him to come in; when he expressed a deep concern at leaving me in a strange country, promising to use every endeavour to see you, and explain every particular. He shewed me twenty guineas, which he said Monsieur Montel had given him, with every necessary, for their voyage, assuring him at the same time, that every care should be taken of me, till health permitted my returning home.

"Mon-

"Monsieur Montel now joined us, and urged the necessity of my friends immediately departing. The fisherman now kissed my hand, and then my child, bidding us farewell, while his wife embraced me with the tenderest affection, and wept over our little Emma as though she had been her own; while their little boy, in his turn, kissed and cried over us. Monsieur Montel, who felt alike for all, finished this affecting scene, by leading them out of the room.

"They had not been gone long, ere Madame Montel came in, and with her presence cheered me for their loss. In less than an hour her husband returned, and informed me that he had seen them embark in safety, and the vessel set sail with a fair wind. Those worthy people arrived in England the second day from their departure. I

fre-

frequently see them; my father has been their great friend, and still continues such. You too shall know them shortly, and thank them for their care.

"Monsieur Montel was partner in a house of great establishment, and had resided in Rotterdam sixteen years. His connexions were extensive; but his friends few. Indeed, the temper of the people was by no means congenial to his. They had but one pursuit, and one pleasure, which was *gain*; while his heart was open to every sentiment of social bliss. He sought, in vain, to gratify this nature among the frigid Dutchmen, till finding his attempts abortive, he resigned his leisure hours entirely to domestic enjoyments, and found in his lady and his library the satisfaction which he was denied abroad.

"I remained confined to my room

ten

ten weeks longer, and at one time was in so dangerous a state, that the physician despaired of my life. I was under a necessity of submitting to the ablactation of my child, and even denied the gratification of kissing her, lest my fever should infect her. In all this trouble, the attention and tenderness of my benefactors were unceasing.

" At length the danger of my malady was removed, and nothing remained but its consequent weakness, from which I recovered by degrees.

" My desire of beholding you grew every day more strong, and I prayed my generous friend to get me a passage in any thing; for I was willing to risk any danger for your sake. But still the time passed away, while my anxiety increased with the interval, till one afternoon Monsieur Montel came home, and,

and, gazing on my features with much earnestness, said he had procured a vessel for me, a Swedish sloop, that had landed two merchants there, and was proceeding with a freight of iron to Lynn, in Norfolk.

"Good God! exclaimed I, then shall I again see my husband!" Madame Montel shed tears, and prayed Heaven would conduct me in safety to your arms.

"It was then four o'clock, and the sloop was to weigh anchor at seven that same evening. Monsieur Montel, therefore, and his lady began preparing every thing for my supply upon the voyage: such as ham, coffee, wine, and in short, all that their kindness could suggest. They also furnished me with bedding, which, with the rest, was forwarded to the sloop.

"The

"The moment of parting at length arrived. The heart of Madame Montel was too full for utterance, nor was I less affected. We embraced with unspeakable sensations, and continued to weep till we almost forgot that we were to part. On my infant she repeated her blessings, giving me for her sake two bracelets of great value.

"Come, come," said Monsieur Montel, with a benevolent smile, and parting us asunder, fearing our delay—"Come, come, you forget there is a Heaven above, where all good souls will meet again *to part no more*." Again he suffered us to embrace, and then conducted me to the sloop, which was just ready to sail.

"He accompanied me on board, and went into the cabin, which was very small, but furnished by him in such a

manner as to render it comfortable. He shewed me all the conveniences.

" These," said he, " will do for your *present* necessities, but we must provide for the *future*. This is no time, Madam, for the etiquette of empty ceremony; accept this, and remember that you are dear to us;" then embracing the child and me, he said, " Farewell, farewell! and God be with you!"

" He then went on deck, distributed money to the sailors, who, as he had previously informed me, knew him, and recommending me to their care, went on shore.

" The present he had presented me with was a morocco case, containing forty guineas. In silence I prayed for bless-

blessings on himself and his lady; for their benevolence surpassed all that I had ever witnessed. Soon I felt the vessel move, and in a short time we were along the coast of Holland.

"The wind seemed to lessen as we proceeded, till, at last, we scarcely stirred upon the waters, and on the following morning were still within sight of the shore that we had left.

"The sailors were extremely attentive and obliging to me, which kindness I returned. For as there were but three in number, and my stock of provision was abundant, I freely shared it with them, for which they seemed at a loss to express their thanks.

"All that day we continued our slow progress, and great part of the succeeding

ceeding night, when the wind changed, and began to increase in fierceness, till it at last amounted to a hurricane. The clouds now gathered over our heads, and presently poured forth their terrors in floods of rain. The wind still augmented, and the billows raged above our vessel. I shrunk to a corner of the cabin, in order to hide myself from danger, till the sea poured in from the deck, and flooded it some feet above the floor. Conceiving we were sinking, I rushed out, and stood exposed amongst the sailors, who were busy at the rudder, which had broken from its hinges, and which they in vain endeavoured to refix. Perceiving all efforts useless, they resigned themselves to despair, and began to loosen some planks that were piled upon the deck. In the height of my terrors, I clung one arm round the ropes, and with the other pressed my

infant to my breast, imploring the pity of the ALMIGHTY.

"The sloop continued to be the sport of the elements. At times the waves beat against me with such fury as almost forced me from my hold; but I was strengthened with a mother's care, and only pressed my child the more closely, and held the more firmly by the ropes.

"At last the day commenced, and England appeared to my view. Alas! it served only to aggravate my distress.

"O happy land!" cried I, "thou never more wilt bear this wretched frame; and my husband will forever mourn the fate of his infant and his wife!"

[illegible] had been [illegible] stored by separa-tion, before a horrid wave rushed over, and buried us in the sea. O God! [illegible] I feel [illegible] my anguish now. I grasped her in my agony, resolving not to part with her, even in death. But Heaven in mercy [illegible] a mother's [illegible] when I rose above the flood, and [illegible] grasped [illegible] all the energy of despair. [illegible] supported me till you, my lover, brought me to the shore."

She ceased, and I smiled at her triumph over misfortune.

"O, Caroline," said I, clasping her in my arms, "now have my suspicions wronged thy spotless virtue! But I have suffered for them, and [illegible] shall know what I have endured. This day, this happy day, we begin to exist anew, and our past sorrows will

serve

serve but to render our future joys more sweet."

Reader, farewell!—The evening closed in bliss, and all were happy.

TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

FINIS.

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